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3. MCGHEE (Rev. R. J.) *Lectures to Protestants*, Lond. 1785
4. EDMONDSTONE'S (Sir Archd.) *Remarks
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PROTESTANT PRINCIPLES :

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE

PARLIAMENTARY ORATIONS

OF

ROYAL DUKES, RIGHT REV. PRELATES, NOBLE
PEERS, AND ILLUSTRIOUS COMMONERS ;

WITH THE

CONSTITUTIONAL DECLARATIONS OF IRISH PROTESTANTS ;

AGAINST THE

Roman Catholic Claims.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

AN ADDRESS TO THE PROTESTANTS OF GREAT
BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

“ NOLUMUS LEGES ANGLIÆ MUTARI.”

LONDON :

JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET.

MDCCCXXVII.

PROTESTANT PRINCIPLES

ESSENTIALS OF THE

PROTESTANT PRINCIPLES
OF THE REFORMATION

BY
THE REV. JOHN CALVIN

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMATION

OF THE REFORMATION

IN THE REFORMATION

OF THE REFORMATION

OF THE REFORMATION

L O N D O N :

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

ROBERT P E E L.

SIR,

WERE it consistent with my own feelings, or an appropriate regard to yours, it would be no difficult employ to demonstrate how great, how numerous, how inestimable are the obligations under which you have placed the British Empire, by an official life of unwearied assiduity, indefatigable labour, sound discretion, statesman-like policy, and incorruptible integrity. The temperate, and benign, and judicious reform of the criminal code, has endeared your name to the philanthropist, while the wisdom of your domestic policy, both in this and the sister kingdom, is already acknowledged by the sensible and discriminating; but, when the turmoil of passion, and the misrepresentations of party shall have passed away, both will be more universally appreciated. On these topics I withhold the full

DEDICATION.

expression of my own feelings, that I may not wound the delicacy of yours.

Respecting one point, Sir, as connected with the subject of the following pages, I must be permitted to observe, that your recent sacrifice of influence, power, and high station, on the altar of public principle, and of political consistency, is an example not less of patriotic disinterestedness, than of conscientious feeling, which transcendently contributes to immortalize your exalted repute—to emblazon your hallowed fame. It was, heretofore, the opprobrium of public men, that in the pursuit of private advantage, they too frequently lost sight of principles, and abandoned their own counsels when no longer compatible with their interests. Recent events have disproved the calumny, so far at least as those British Statesmen, the uncompromising advocates of Constitutional Protestantism, are concerned; they having demonstrated to the world more noble motives of action, and more honourable principles of conduct. “*Cari sunt liberi, propinqui, familiares; sed omnes omnium caritates patria una complexa est.*”

The following pages are designed to concentrate the opinions of whatever is high in rank, sublime in sentiment, virtuous in deport-

DEDICATION.

ment, illustrious in talent, on a question of vital importance to the interests of the United Kingdom. The partisans of the Roman Catholic pretensions have been long and strenuously endeavouring to convince the world, that all the virtue, ability, and wisdom of the country were advocates of their cause, whilst ignorance, prejudice, and bigotry, were its only opponents. How much of truth, how much of candour, how much of justice there is in such an assertion, the following pages will enable the Nation accurately to determine. I shall not attempt to impeach the integrity and talents of those who differ from us on this momentous question, but I do sincerely lament the course they pursue, and the opinions they maintain, feeling assured that ultimately they cannot be otherwise than prejudicial to the welfare, and happiness, and prosperity of these realms. Strengthened as the cause of the Roman Catholic Claims must be, by the late Ministerial arrangements, it indubitably behoves the numerous conscientious opponents of that measure to UNITE in their resistance to its further progress; and who can despond of their successful efforts, to preserve unimpaired the venerable fabric of our unrivalled Constitution, reared by the zeal, the piety, the

DEDICATION.

wisdom, and magnanimity of our immortal ancestors?

“ Yes! in that generous cause, for ever strong,
The patriot’s virtue, and the poet’s song,
Still, as the tide of ages rolls away,
Shall charm the world, unconscious of decay!”

Should the following pages, Sir, meet your approbation, I shall consider myself fortunate; and if they tend to confirm in genuine Protestant Principles a wavering mind, or to enlighten an ignorant one, my object in their publication will be in happy progress towards its fulfilment. In the earnest hope that a kind Providence may long spare you, as the able friend, the eloquent advocate, and the uncompromising champion, of Protestantism, the only sure foundation of Civil and Religious Freedom,

I have the honour to remain,

Sir,

Your faithful and devoted Servant,

W. G.

MIDDLE TEMPLE,

May 14th, 1827.

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TO

THE PROTESTANTS

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

“ BORN and educated in this country, I glory in the name of BRITON ; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people, whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne ; and I doubt not, but their steadiness in these principles will equal the firmness of my invariable resolution to adhere to, and strengthen, this excellent Constitution in Church and State.”—*First Royal Speech of KING GEORGE THE THIRD.*

“ I rely, with the utmost confidence, upon your zealous exertions to promote true piety and virtue—to reclaim those who are in error by the force of Divine Truth,—and to uphold and extend among my people the preference which is so justly due to the pure doctrine and service of our Established Church. That Church has every claim to my constant support and protection.”—*Speech of his MAJESTY GEORGE THE FOURTH, to his Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other Lords and Clergy of Convocation, Nov. 28, 1826.*

BRITONS AND IRISHMEN,

THE auspicious period has arrived for your benign co-operation with those inestimable Constitutional Patriots, who maintain and defend, in both Houses of Parliament, the Laws, the Religion, the Liberties of this empire. Public opinion indubitably accords with their hallowed maxims, especially, with those advocates of “ Protestant Principles” who have manifested a fearless determination to

repudiate the pretensions, and to oppose the demands of individuals professing the Roman Catholic religion.

A unison of sentiment, in behalf of the barriers erected by the wisdom and experience of your immortal ancestors, for the security of our glorious Constitution in Church and State, pervades almost every rank and class, and portion of society, within this realm. Britons—loyal and noble-minded Britons—displayed, during the past general elections, an enthusiastic ardour in promoting the return of those personages who unveiled and exposed in the Senate, the Jesuitical devices of your opponents, and while successfully combating proposals to entertain claims irreconcilable with Constitutional Protestantism, they also proclaimed the danger and non-efficiency in conceding their “total, unqualified, and unconditional,” demands. Your former eloquent and consistent advocates were re-elected, besides numerous friends of the established laws chosen in preference to those politicians, who, heretofore, encouraged innovations on your most sacred rights, and indefeasible privileges. The spirit of Liberty, and of Protestantism, predominates in the kingdom.

At this condition of affairs you have unquestionable cause for rejoicing; but remember, that your political and religious opponents are sedulously endeavouring to consummate their perilous designs. They leave no means—no opportunity untried, for assailing the hitherto impregnable pillars of Protes-

tantism, and of misrepresenting the maxims on which British Freedom is founded. Every creed, with the clergy and professors of every sect, unconnected with the Roman Catholic religion, are vituperously aspersed by their professional agitators, and intermeddling political Priests.

Besides, they have re-organized Roman Catholic Associations—they recollect Roman Catholic Rent, for purposes the most iniquitous,—and, during the recent county elections in Ireland, they adopted the demoralizing course of dissociating a miserable peasantry from their beneficent landlords. They calumniate not only the supreme tribunals of justice, and authoritative powers of the realm; but also, the noble, the benevolent, and the illustrious, from the highest to the humblest subject, who durst express accordance with the established laws and commendable principles of our Protestant Constitution.

FRIENDS AND BRITONS.—Whether this opprobrium of the magistracy, the parliament, and the laws—this disparagement of your invaluable institutions,—this detraction of your apostolic religion, and similar untoward events, are to pass unnoticed and unproved, remains for you to determine. But, is it expedient—is it just, that a few disaffected individuals, reckless of honour, and disregarding the tranquillity of the kingdom, should be daily rolling the fire-brand of dissension among the people, to further their ambitious and undefinable projects? Is it tolerable, that these discontented persons

should be annually disturbing the Council of the Nation, and be incessantly stimulating the ignorant to petition for privileges, the attainment of which would confer on them no possible advantage? Are we, or are we not, to maintain the political and religious liberties of this empire—to support the prevalence of constitutional principles—and to rebuke the intolerant demeanour of our defamers? Are we, or are we not, to preserve the blessings we inherit from our illustrious forefathers—are we, or are we not, to transmit those unendangered and unimpaired to our Protestant posterity? These are important topics, which, if you, the zealous admirers and champions of rational freedom, of social order, and of Protestant Ascendancy, were to investigate, would certainly induce the adoption of such precautionary measures, as must effect an indissoluble UNION among the friends and advocates of our benign political and religious Establishments.

To promote this desirable object, let it therefore be considered,—Whether the measures adopted by our ancestors, to render the British Nation essentially Protestant, ought to be rescinded; and whether the barriers erected at various periods, for the security of our glorious Constitution in Church and State, ought to be dismantled, merely for ephemeral political expediency, and to mitigate the rancour of a body, which acknowledges the jurisdiction of a foreign ecclesiastical monarch within this kingdom? Without expatiating on the vital importance of this subject, or the necessity of its thorough investigation,

the following propositions are intended for its demonstration, not only, by incontrovertible facts from Protestant authority, but also, by the avowed declarations of Roman Catholic lay and clerical leaders.

- I.—That the Protestants of Great Britain and Ireland possess an acquired, and inalienable right to political and religious ascendancy in the State.
- II.—That the Roman Catholics, who recognize a foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction within this realm, enjoy as many privileges, as it is expedient for a nation essentially Protestant to concede.
- III.—That the acquisition of political and religious power in the kingdom, is the manifest object of the Roman Catholics; and that, as similar power in possession of persons professing the same creed has been productive of baneful consequences in those states where existent, such power must therefore prove imminently detrimental to the welfare, peace, and happiness of this Protestant empire.
- IV.—That the speeches and publications emanating from divers members of the Roman Catholic Association, and the public transactions of this *imperium in imperio*, are demonstrative of the unconstitutional course which Roman Catholics would pursue, if ever they possess “total, unqualified, and unconditional emancipation.”
- V.—That, during the recent elections in Ireland, the Roman Catholic Priesthood exercised an inauspicious and undue influence over their flocks, and manifested symptoms of spiritual domination over their commu-

nicants, for the undisguised attainment of political purposes.

VI.—That the Roman Catholic Forty-Shilling Freeholders, having violated the original object which the legislature contemplated when conceding to this body the Elective Franchise, they have therefore incapacitated themselves from being retained in possession of this privilege;—this portion of the Elective Franchise should consequently be re-modelled, or the amount of freehold qualification increased.

VII.—That the wisest Statesmen, and most distinguished Protestants of the past age, were decidedly opposed to a “total, unqualified, and unconditional” concession of the Roman Catholic claims.

VIII.—That a preponderating majority of British and Irish Peers, with a majority of British Representatives, being opposed to this misnamed “Emancipation”—it is a measure which, being repugnant to the fundamental axioms of the British Constitution, and discordant with the inclinations of the people, is therefore unsuitable, inexpedient, and unnecessary for this Protestant nation.

These are the topics that require your most earnest attention and serious consideration—these, the propositions which shall be clearly illustrated, and satisfactorily proved. But, previous to entering upon their particular demonstration, it may be demanded, what are the enactments which preclude Roman Catholics from a full participation of power with Protestants?

The principal Statutes are, the 1st of ELIZABETH; (chap. i.) being “An Act to restore to the Crown the ancient jurisdiction over the state, ecclesiastical and spiritual, and *abolishing all foreign powers* contrary to the same;” the 30th CHARLES II. (chap. i. st. 2.) being “An Act for the more effectual preserving the King’s person and government, *by disabling Papists from sitting in either House of Parliament;*” THE BILL OF RIGHTS (1 William and Mary,) which excludes Roman Catholics from the Crown for the following reason, “Whereas the late King James the Second, by the assistance of divers evil *counsellors, judges, and ministers*, employed by him, did endeavour to subvert and extirpate the *Protestant religion*, and the laws and liberties of this kingdom;” and, “Whereas” proceeds the Bill of Rights “it hath been found by experience, that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a *Popish prince*, or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist; the said Lords spiritual and temporal, and Commons do further pray that it may be enacted, that all and every person, or persons, that is, or are, or shall be reconciled to, or shall hold communication with the See or Church of Rome, or shall profess the Popish religion, or shall marry a Papist, shall be *excluded*, and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy, the Crown and government of this realm and Ireland;” the ACT OF UNION WITH SCOTLAND (5 Anne, chap. viii.) states, in order “that the true Protestant religion professed and established by law in the

Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, should be effectually and *unalterably secured*," it was enacted, that "*all and singular Acts of Parliament, in force for the establishment and preservation of the Church of England, and the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government thereof, shall remain and be in full force for ever;*" the KING'S CORONATION OATH, the words of which are, "I will, to the utmost of my power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel and *the Protestant reformed religion established by law*; and I will preserve unto the bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, *all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them;*"—besides the Act of Uniformity, the Corporation and the Test Acts.

Whether these preservative statutes against Popery—these remaining safeguards of Protestantism—be maintained or repealed, must be determined by you, the friends and admirers of our glorious and unrivalled Constitution. Why were the principal of these protective laws enacted? To exclude the Stuarts from the throne of this realm, and their partisans, whose religious prejudices and arbitrary political principles were repugnant to the spirit, and incompatible with the existence, of British Liberty, from offices of trust, emolument, and power.

The creed of the Romish communion had been discovered by rueful experience to be irreconcilably opposed to civil freedom and to our apostolic reli-

gion. Whenever any opportunity occurred, have not the adherents of the Pope uniformly employed their strenuous exertions to obtain not an equality, but a pernicious and an overbearing ascendancy in the State? They adopted such perilous modes of proceeding, and so frequently disturbed the tranquillity of the empire, that our wise forefathers were impelled in self-defence, to relieve themselves by these enactments from tyrannical oppression, and to render their posterity unfettered from the intolerable shackles of a foreign ecclesiastical despot. And, this leads immediately to the consideration of our first proposition:—

I.—THAT THE PROTESTANTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND POSSESS AN ACQUIRED, AND INALIENABLE RIGHT TO POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ASCENDANCY IN THE STATE.

Protestants have acquired a right to political ascendancy in this empire, in consequence of their faithful and immutable adherence to the fundamental maxims of the British Constitution in Church and State, besides their zealous guardianship of those laws, established, at various periods, for the protection of this empire from foreign dominion. Actuated by these principles, our Protestant ancestors selected the Brunswick family, from its manifest devotion to civil and religious liberty, to wield the regal sceptre over these kingdoms. And, that choice which originated in motives of prudence

and patriotism, has been revered by the loyal, and is endeared by the noble-minded, for the magnanimous, consistent, and constitutional virtues of this illustrious lineage.

Since that memorable epoch, our national prosperity has advanced in an unexpected and unexampled degree. The beneficent power of our Sovereignty has been extended over divers states, and our alliance constantly besought by numerous foreign potentates. While British valour, with the glory of our victorious fleets, and armies, have been the perpetual theme of rejoicing at home, have they not been incessantly envied, but never surpassed, by surrounding nations? Have not the enactments of our legislature, and the measures of our government, been frequently commended for succouring the oppressed, and for tending to rescue millions of men from the most ruthless tyranny? Have we not successfully negotiated in behalf of tottering empires, and preserved them from apparently inevitable ruin? And, why have such political blessings accompanied our measures? Because we possessed Sovereigns, whose ruling maxims accorded with prudence, and were tempered with clemency,—a Parliament, whose auspicious enactments were justly applauded as conducive to the public weal,—and a loyal dutiful people, zealous for the happiness, the prosperity, and the glory of our empire.

BRITAIN having flourished under salutary Protestant councils, and with the benign co-operation of a Protestant people, is it politic, is it just by revers-

ing the scene, to endanger the happy alliance of Church and State, or, to impede a continuance of this felicitous condition of our affairs? Does it accord with the most visionary political principles to endeavour to appease the rancour of a designing and Jesuitical party, by expanding the portals of our venerated Constitution; or, by dismantling the few remaining barriers of Protestantism? Should not the natural consequences of these measures be sedulously weighed, and thoroughly contemplated before their baneful adoption? Enactments of this experimental nature should never be passed without diligently considering those for whom the risk is run, besides those who are deprived of their indefeasible rights and privileges.

The British Government, even in the zenith of its happiness and prosperity, should never forget the gratuitous exploits of those who contributed towards raising this nation to an unrivalled pinnacle of grandeur, and of glory. It should still remember, that Constitutional Britons and loyal Irishmen voluntarily enrolled themselves into military bodies, when appalling perils menaced the State;—perils which portended the subversion of regal power, and the destruction of legislative authority. Who can forget the zeal and unanimity which invigorated Britons, when Buonaparte—the colossus of tyranny—contemplated the invasion of this kingdom? Who can forget their unparalleled liberality in contributing several millions sterling towards defraying

the pecuniary exigencies of that period; and their intense anxiety for being marshalled to meet the insidious and deceitful foe? Who can forget their dauntless determination to sacrifice their property, their interests,—nay, even their lives, in defence of those principles which have long guided and actuated the government of this realm? Who remembers not, that those were the **PROTESTANTS OF ENGLAND?**

And, who remembers not the **PROTESTANT VOLUNTEERS OF IRELAND**, with those Protestants who preserved that kingdom to Great Britain, at a critical epoch? Who can forget the conduct of those patriots, enrolling themselves into a national militia,—encountering privations and fatigue to defend their country; and, thus securing, as a precious jewel in the royal crown,—that important portion of the empire to Great Britain? “Respect I entreat you,” (said the Earl of Limerick in the House of Lords,*) “the feelings of the Protestants of Ireland, ever true to their religion, faithful to their king, and enthusiastically attached to the British connexion. Descended from yourselves; in fighting valiantly their own battles, they have served your interests, and have prevented by their exertions, that fair and beautiful island, from being torn from the British empire. In seeking new friends, whom possibly you may fail to conciliate, neglect not your old ones;

* Speech of the Earl of Limerick in the House of Lords, May 10th, 1805.

but *remain firm to those who have in the worst of times remained firm to you.*” “Remember,” (said Lord Oriell,) “that you have settled us (Protestants) in Ireland, under the faith of your protection; that on that faith, we claim as our inheritance all the blessings of that glorious Constitution which our ancestors and yours have fought and bled for;—the Hanover Succession, the illustrious House of Brunswick on the throne, a Protestant King, with Protestant Counsellors, Protestant Lords, and Protestant Commons. This is what I call PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY in the true sense of the phrase, and while I can utter my voice in this House, I will ever demand it for my country.”* The Earl of Westmoreland, late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, also declared in the House of Lords, that the Protestants of Ireland† were, “*a people by whose loyalty and courage that kingdom was secured, whose conduct was never equalled by any description of men in any country.*”‡

But, why were those Britons and Irishmen united in sentiment,—united in operation? Because they mutually venerated the Laws, the Liberties, and

* Speech of Lord Oriell, in 1805. See Protestant Principles, page 241.

† The number of Protestants in Ireland can be accurately ascertained from the last census, taken in 1821, which shows that in Ulster, the population was 1,998,000 of whom 1,170,000 were Protestants. In Leinster, the population was 1,757,000, of whom 370,000 were Protestants. In Munster, the population was 1,935,000, of whom 200,000 were Protestants. In all Ireland there were 1,860,000 Protestants, and 4,900,000 Roman Catholics and some odd numbers. See Speech of Leslie Foster, Esq., in Protestant Principles, p. 300, where the subject is fully canvassed.

‡ Speech of the Earl of Westmoreland. See Protestant Principles, p. 64.

Constitution of this realm, the political blessings of which, having long enjoyed, they were consequently desirous to transmit them unendangered, and unimpaired to their Protestant posterity.

That Protestants possess an inalienable right to religious ascendancy must be manifest, when it is considered, that they have ceded to the State, the supremacy of their Church—which cession naturally entitles it to civil protection and to exclusive establishment. If divers religions were admitted to an equality in the kingdom—the United Church of England and Ireland,*—that Church which, like

————— A rock-built temple stands,
Stupendous pile! unwrought by mortal hands,

in consequence of having lost her supremacy, would hold an inferior station, and be therefore in-

*. That the Irish and British Churches were united at an early period and agreed in their religious worship, is manifest from both concurring in the time of celebrating Easter; also, Austin's three bishops, who invited the Irish to join the Church of Rome, said, in their letter to the Irish bishops, that the Irish differed in nothing from the Britons.—*Bede's Hist.* l. ii. c. 4. "The bishops in Ireland were nominated by the Irish Kings, as the bishops in England by the Saxon and Norman Kings down to the beginning of the *twelfth* century."—*Usher's Relig. of the Ancient Irish*, p. 78, 79. *Dublin*, 1815. "It cannot be showed out of any monument of antiquity, that the Bishop of Rome appointed any legates to exercise spiritual jurisdiction over Ireland before Gillibertus, that is, before the *twelfth* century."—*Usher's Relig. of the Ancient Irish*, p. 74. "The first ecclesiastical tribute, that ever came into the Pope's coffers out of Ireland, was the voluntary offer of Henry II."—*Usher*, p. 120. "All ecclesiastical authority in Ireland, had, till about four years before the accession of Henry II. been exercised by her own prelates."—*Leland's Hist. of Ireland*, vol. i. chap. 1.

An ample description of the *ancient religion* of Ireland, and other matters pertinent thereto, is subjoined in the appendix to "Protestant Principles."

competent to contend against rival sects, with proportionate strength. The State is consequently bound to maintain her security—to preserve her rights and privileges—to render her paramount and ascendant above every religious sect in these dominions.

The independence and antiquity of the Church of England are indubitably established by the most faithful and eminent historians. Gildas states, that the Gospel was preached in Britain before the defeat of Boadicea, which took place in the year 61. Tertullian, in the second century says, that before his time Christianity had extended itself to parts of Britain inaccessible to the Roman arms. Eusebius remarks, that the Gospel was preached in the British isles “*by some of the Apostles:*” while Theodoret and Venantius declare, that St. Paul was in Britain and founded the British Church. To these facts respecting its antiquity, a few observations may be subjoined as to its independence of the Papal See. And, the principal—that which distinguished all ancient churches that dissented from the Romish—is the remarkable difference in the time of celebrating Easter, which demonstrates the British Church to have been totally independent of the Papal See until the seventh century. Further, at that period, the British bishops disallowed the Pope’s supremacy or power, in rejecting the overtures of Austin, and in refusing to acknowledge any spiritual authority, but that of their own metropolitan.

The Church of England (*Ecclesia Anglicana*) be-

came incorporated with the civil Constitution of the realm at an early period. It was placed under the special protection of the law by Magna Charta;—that great Charter which was framed by the Barons, who refused the Pope's mediation, and by a Clergy, who hated the Pope for his exactions. And, the Church of England continues to this day the same national Church, that has subsisted from the time of its first apostolical institution, having the same episcopal government, and the same fundamental doctrines, which it had from the beginning; but, freed from the unscriptural usages and anti-christian doctrines, which had crept into it during the dark ages of Papal influence.*

* See the "Protestant's Catechism" by DR. BURGESS, Bishop of Salisbury (late of St. David's) where, in p. 11, the question arises:

Q. What answer do you give to the question, which Popish writers exultingly, but ignorantly, ask: *Where was the Church of England before the Reformation?*

A. I answer that the Church of Britain existed for *six centuries* before the Pope's *first missionaries* were sent to this country for the conversion of our Saxon ancestors; and for *eleven centuries* before the establishment of the Pope's spiritual jurisdiction in England.

Q. What are the several epochs of the British Church before the arrival of the Pope's missionary, Austin?

A. There are seven:

1. St. Paul's preaching in Britain in the *first* century.
2. Lucius's protection of Christianity in the *second*.
3. The Diocletian persecution, which in the beginning of the *fourth* century, martyred the British saints, who were Christians of the Church in the *third* century.
4. The Council of Arles, at which were present several British bishops, in the *fourth* century.
5. The Synod of Verulam in the *fifth* century.
6. The Synod of Llanddewi Brefi in the *sixth* century.
7. The rejection of the Pope's authority by the British bishops in the *seventh* century.

But, why does our tolerant Reformed religion justly deserve a national pre-eminence? Because the Christian Apostolical Church of England—(observes a modern writer)—simple in its worship, pure in its creeds, modest in its pretensions, pastoral in its care, joining humility with inquiry, and tempering freedom with obedience, with a liturgy full of practical holiness, a discipline of plain and sound ordinances, and doctrines of peace and salvation, is formed to be the handmaid of justice, and the meet companion of good government. With such a religion the alliance of the State is noble, generous, and grateful. To avoid the solecism of an *imperium in imperio*, the supremacy is vested in the civil magistrate. But the supremacy keeps within its natural bounds. It leaves untouched, the province of the ministry, its duties and its exterior discipline, while it presides over and regulates the external economy of the Church. Thus, there is a close alliance without intermixture of office, or the interference of the magistrate in matters purely ecclesiastical; and without the danger of a paramount Priesthood, or factious hierarchy.—Parallel gradations and distinctions clothe with dignity and gravity the ministers of religion, and match them in equal society with the civil orders, from the humblest to the highest ranks. The luxuriant harmony of our free state is accompanied and controlled throughout, by the authoritative voice of truth and divine morality—Church and State under this happy temperament, form but one society—Every member of the one is

a member of the other, and Liberty, Law, and Religion, is the triple ligature which binds the Constitution round our hearts.

The legislature, therefore, in gratitude for services rendered to the empire, by the spiritual and lay members of Protestantism, should ever manifest an earnest zeal, and an anxious determination to accord with the views, and to promote the interests, of its immutable adherents. When petitions, in behalf of Protestant Principles and against Roman Catholic pretensions, are presented to either House, they should be estimated as containing the sentiments of men, who render to the Sovereign an unequivocal and an undivided allegiance—who acknowledge no foreign power, prelate, or potentate, within this realm,—and whose devoted attachment to the Brunswick family has been frequently evinced, and still reigns predominant.

Adhering to the maxims, propagated at the earliest dawn, and resplendent consummation of British liberty, Protestants of the present day, reprobate not, but commend, an indefinite toleration, to every sect and class of persons in this kingdom. But, forewarned by history and existing statutes, that Roman Catholics have been sedulously excluded from power, in consequence of their inclination to arbitrary political principles, besides foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and convinced by experience of the inefficiency and danger of further concessions,—we oppose their “total, unqualified and unconditional” demands, as repugnant to the

established laws of the Nation,—incompatible with the spirit of our glorious Constitution,—and incongruous with the precautionary principles of Protestantism. “Our Church is Protestant, our State is Protestant, our Government is Protestant in all its parts:” or, as LORD COLCHESTER significantly remarked, “Our Protestant ascendancy must be paramount, or we shall have, in no long time, a Roman Catholic domination. Let us not deceive ourselves. These two claims to power are utterly incompatible and irreconcilable.”*

II.—THAT, THE ROMAN CATHOLICS WHO RECOGNIZE A FOREIGN ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION WITHIN THIS REALM, ENJOY AS MANY PRIVILEGES, AS IT IS EXPEDIENT FOR A NATION ESSENTIALLY PROTESTANT TO CONCEDE.

What privileges do individuals professing the Roman Catholic religion enjoy indiscriminately with their Protestant fellow-subjects? They possess every benefit of civil liberty,—are eligible to almost every office in the Army and Navy, to the Magistracy, to the freedom of Corporations, and can legally exercise the Elective Franchise. They are members of the learned professions, and in the law department, several persons of this creed enjoy lucrative situations, among which is the Chief Remembrancership of Ireland, and the Assistant-Barristership of some counties in that kingdom. They gra-

* Speech of Lord Colchester in the House of Lords.—See Protestant Principles, p. 76.

duate at the University, besides possessing a college (Maynooth) built at the public expense, and supported by an annual grant from Government, for the exclusive instruction and preparation of their clergy. They are governors of public boards, and several of this sect have been appointed to influential situations in the excise, custom, and other revenue departments. They are free in the acquisition, in the enjoyment, and in the disposal of every species of property. They can purchase land, settle their estates, and enjoy all the profits arising from commercial industry. They possess the undisturbed exercise of their religious worship, immunity from partial burdens, and the unrestricted choice of residence, society, occupation, and discipline.*

The Roman Catholics of Ireland enjoy those pri-

* Dr. Troy, in a pastoral letter dated Dublin, 25th of May, 1798, makes a warm and handsome eulogy on the large share of civil, political, and religious rights with which the Roman Catholics were now legally invested. But another prelate, Dr. Moylan, expresses the same sentiments so much better, that I would prefer making use of his words. "I would have you," says he, addressing the Roman Catholics of his diocese, Cork, 16th April, 1798, "I would have you not unmindful of the blessings you enjoy, and the favours you have received: certain privileges excepted, *you possess the advantages of the Constitution. The penal laws under which our fathers groaned, have been almost all done away.* You have the comfort of exercising your holy religion without controul; and to the benignity of government and the liberality of Parliament, we are indebted for the establishment and endowment of a Roman Catholic college, on an extensive plan, which will afford a liberal education to our youth, and a supply of clergy to our Church, when the present generation have finished their career." "*These are favours that should excite and call out all our gratitude; and this gratitude we should evince by a steady attachment to the Constitution, an unshaken loyalty to our gracious Sovereign,—a Sovereign, who has done more for the Roman Catholic body, and, indeed, for this kingdom in general, than any or all of his predecessors.*" See Rev. Dr. Phillpotts's very able and powerful letter to Mr. Canning, p. 128-9.

vileges equally with their fellow-subjects of the Protestant Church. Are not these important, honourable, numerous, and, as several illustrious statesmen conceive, as many as it is expedient for a nation essentially Protestant to concede to individuals, who, in acknowledging a foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction within this realm, consequently render to the State, but an imperfect and a divided allegiance?

For, “the Catholic prelates (says Dr. Doyle,) *recognize in the Pope, a right and power, not only to suppress and establish chapters, but also to suppress, alter, modify and change bishoprics, to reduce metropolitans to the rank of suffragans, and vice versâ, whenever the interests of the Church or necessity requires it; but what may be more shocking to the layman, they even believe that the Pope is the judge of the necessity, which would warrant such a proceeding.*”^{*} And, Dr. Doyle, also observes, “whether a Pope ought, or ought not, to have *spiritual authority in this realm*, is a question which depends on the other:—Whether he be, or be not the head of the Catholic Church, for if he be, it is manifest, that wherever there are Catholics he must have jurisdiction over them.” “How can a man declare that he has not jurisdiction in this realm, whereas his having it, and exercising it, is as notorious as the existence of the sun at noon. In

^{*} Dr. Doyle's (J. K. L.) Letter in the Dublin Evening Post, March 21st, 1822.

what does *power, authority, or jurisdiction* consist? In this, simply, that he who possesses them can command some other, and punish him should he disobey,—thus the King, &c.”*

Thus writes Dr. Doyle, (J. K. L. *i. e.* James (titular bishop of) Kildare and Leighlin) and when so grave, so learned, so powerful a Roman Catholic authority of the present day, unequivocally acknowledges the Pope’s jurisdiction within this realm, should not this baneful assumption excite the most painful apprehension :—can the circumstance of a foreign *imperium in imperio*, be doubted by any rational-minded man?† What deprived King John of his crown? The Pope’s spiritual authority. By what means were the subjects of Henry VIII., of Queen Elizabeth, James I., and Charles I., absolved from their allegiance to their Sovereign? The Pope’s spiritual authority. What is it, that declares the Protestant ministry of the Church to be heretical and invalid, besides Protestant marriages to be null and void? The Pope’s spiritual authority. What is it, that creates a control over the minds of Roman Catholics superior to the laws of the land, that

* Letters on the State of Ireland, by J. K. L., p. 231, 232.

† Dr. Murray, titular Roman Catholic bishop in Dublin, being asked before the Commons’ Committee, “ Is the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, that the same *undivided allegiance* is due to the Pope in *spiritual* matters?” answered, “ It is; that *allegiance* which is due to him as *spiritual head*, and which is limited by the canons.”

Are there not ‘ spiritual courts, both in England and Ireland,’ the decrees of which, have a temporal effect, and are executed by a temporal process?

prevents their acknowledging the entire sovereignty of their King,—and compels them to obey a foreign jurisdiction? The spiritual authority of the Pope.*

The EARL OF LIVERPOOL was therefore justified in declaring that,—“ the Protestant gives an entire allegiance to his Sovereign; the Roman Catholic a divided one. The service of the former is complete, that of the latter only qualified; and unless it can be proved to me, that the man who works for half a day, is entitled to as much wages as the man who works the whole day, or in other words, the half is equal to the whole, I cannot admit, that the Roman Catholic, whose allegiance is divided between a spiritual and a temporal master, is entitled to the enjoyment of the same civil rights and privileges as the Protestant, whose allegiance is undivided, and

* See DR. BURGESS'S Protestant Catechism, wherein the reverend prelate asks: “ Q. What, then, if every papist in England and Ireland should renounce the *temporal* authority of the Pope? A. The renunciation of the Pope's *temporal* authority, is no security against the influence of his *spiritual* jurisdiction, and therefore no warrant for entrusting Papists with political power. Q. Do not the advocates of Popery connect religion with their plea for the Roman Catholic claims? A. They do. They admit the Pope's Supremacy to be a part of a Roman Catholic's religion, and urge the sacred rights of conscience in his favour; as if a Protestant had not the same sacred rights, and was not equally bound in conscience to deny the said Supremacy, and to oppose it, as a false ground of the Roman Catholic's plea for his non-conformity. Q. Is not religion also very intimately connected with the Protestant's objections to the Roman Catholic claims? A. It is. Our Protestant Constitution is religious as well as political. *Constitution in Church and State*, is the standard of loyalty and religion. The King is the head of our Church, from whom the Roman Catholic transfers his spiritual allegiance to the Pope.”

who acknowledges but one ruler.”* DR. MARSH, Lord Bishop of Peterborough,† observes that, “allegiance to the Pope *must* interfere with allegiance to the King. And when it does interfere, when the soul is threatened on the one side, the body only on the other, men will yield to that authority, of which they are the most afraid. The power, which commands the conscience, will command the conduct of the man. And this power, which is a *foreign* power of a foreign prince, is so easily directed by foreign intrigue to purposes subservient of our Constitution, that they who submit to such a power, are hardly qualified to undertake the guidance of our Constitution.”‡

From what privileges are the Roman Catholics of

* Earl of Liverpool's speech, see Protestant Principles, p. 47.

† Bishop of Peterborough's speech, see Protestant Principles, p. 232.

‡ “To talk of drawing a line of demarcation between a Roman Catholic's allegiance to the Crown and that to the Pope, is vain. *What is allegiance but devotion of mind and body to a superior power, whatever that may be?* If two powers demand allegiance at the same time, and the character of one of those powers, and the nature of his supremacy is such as directly affect the conscience in its tenderest point, although that supremacy may not be practically exercised so as to interfere with the allegiance due to the other power, who can pretend to say that it will always be so forbearing? It *has* interfered, and certainly may interfere, and the conception entertained by the most moderate Roman Catholic of the ultimate and inalienable power of the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church, would prevent any son of that Church, who did not wilfully cavil under the influence of party, from denying its possibility. Mr. Charles Butler, in his chambers in Lincoln's Inn, may protest against any such sovereignty as he pleases; but what is a Letter or a Book from that ingenious person to us, who know what has been perpetrated and defended during the very last year in France, in Spain, and in Portugal.”—Remarks on the Roman Catholic Question, p. 42, 43. 1827.

Ireland disqualified, but the *guidance* of our Constitution? They are excluded from those judicial, parliamentary, and high official dignities, which must be indispensably preserved, in the sole possession of Protestants, for the balance of impartial legislation, and due administration of justice over the various orders of society, and the divers sects which exist, and are tolerated, in this empire. If the remaining disabilities on Roman Catholics were repealed, besides the mishaps consequent on unrestricted foreign jurisdiction, it would also be opening a broad path for the destruction of our unrivalled Constitution, the fundamental axiom of which, the Earl of Liverpool declared, is “not only that the King should be Protestant, but that he should have Protestant Lords, Protestant Commons, Protestant Counsellors, and Protestant Judges.”

III.—THAT, THE ACQUISITION OF POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS POWER IN THE KINGDOM, IS THE MANIFEST OBJECT OF THE ROMAN CATHOLICS; AND THAT, AS SIMILAR POWER IN POSSESSION OF PERSONS PROFESSING THE SAME CREED, HAS BEEN PRODUCTIVE OF BANEFUL CONSEQUENCES IN THOSE STATES WHERE EXISTENT,—SUCH POWER MUST THEREFORE PROVE IMMINENTLY DETRIMENTAL TO THE WELFARE, PEACE, AND HAPPINESS OF THIS PROTESTANT EMPIRE.

Power—political and religious power,—unquestionably appears to be the principal object which

influences the conduct of the Roman Catholic body. Towards its acquisition, the declamations of its laymen, the measures of its priests, and the proceedings of the Roman Catholic Association seem solely concentrated. It is not exemption from civil penal enactments,—it is not an equality with several sects of their Protestant Dissenting brethren which they require ;—but that, which only remains for Protestants of the Established Church to concede, power—religious and political power, in the management of State affairs. This is their desired object ; this, their imperious demand ! this, ‘ their dream by night and thought by day.’ Nothing short of it—“ total, unqualified, and unconditional”—will repress their restless pursuits, or appease their almost boundless ambition.

But, Britons and Irishmen should sedulously inquire, after considering the various disabilities which have been removed for the relief of Roman Catholics, whether they *were* satisfied with those concessions when obtained ? Did they suffice to curb that refractory spirit manifested previous to their grant, or, did not the Roman Catholics afterwards declaim with equal, if not increased violence, against the established institutions of the realm, and vituperate the loyal, the great, the beneficent, and the wise ? And, if their professions which were publicly made, and as publicly recanted be considered, must it not appear manifest, that it being impossible to rely on *ipse dixit* assertions, so

it is impossible to determine where their innovating principles shall terminate?*

Various restraints were removed in 1778, by the Irish Parliament, from the Roman Catholic body; contentment was to ensue—but were they satisfied? In 1782, additional favours were conferred on the Roman Catholics; who, having sought further boons, these were not merely granted in 1793, but numerous others far more important—yet, were they satisfied? A few months had scarcely elapsed, when in 1795, notwithstanding their re-iterated public declarations—they petitioned, and have been since petitioning the Legislature, for admission into the very vitals of the British Constitution, and unequivocally require a share in the direction of State affairs, with an eligibility to the highest offices of trust, emolument, and power—

————— “ Grant power,
And then I grant we put a sting into them,
That at their will, they may do danger with.”

That the concession of “total, unqualified, and unconditional” power to the Roman Catholics, must prove detrimental to the welfare, peace, and hap-

* “*Catholic Emancipation*,” says Dr. Doyle, “will not remedy the evils of the *tithe system*: it will not allay the fervour of religious zeal, the perpetual clashing of two churches, one elevated, the other fallen, both high-minded, perhaps intolerant: it will not check the rancorous animosities with which different sects assail each other. It will not remove all suspicion of partiality in the government; were Antonius himself the viceroy: it will not create that sympathy between the different orders of the State, which is ever mainly dependant on religion. Withal, Catholic emancipation is a great measure, and of itself not only would effect much, but open a passage to ulterior measures, which a provident legislature could without difficulty effect.”—Letter to Mr. Robertson, pages 5 and 6.

piness of this Protestant kingdom, is demonstrable not only by contemplating the depressed and enslaved condition of those states where they predominate,* but also from the undeniable fact, of two opposite political and religious parties being then conjointly established in the State.

Protestants, at present, perform the responsible duties connected with municipal, legislative, and high constitutional stations of trust and power; but, were the Roman Catholics “emancipated,” would

* “It is not from this country (Ireland) that we are to take our estimate of the Roman Catholic Church—here, under the eye of a more enlightened community, her laity are reserved and circumspect, and her priests cannot as in other countries—“Play such fantastic tricks before high heaven, as might make angels weep.” Look to where she has established her head-quarters, look to Spain, to Portugal, to Italy, what a picture do they present? A clergy without learning,—a nobility without education,—a commonalty without occupation,—a population without subsistence,—a mass of mendicants without number,—and a country without a national character, save that of indolence, beggary, sensuality and superstition,—a country that unites the widest extremes of mental and moral degradation, and combines all the refinements of vice with the simplicity of the profoundest ignorance: where the libertine rushes reeking from the brothel to the confessional, and the shrine gives alternate shelter to the penitent and the assassin, a country where the native, the born vassal of the deadliest of all despots—priestly power, dare not even call his *soul* his own, where he lives without one generous purpose, one lofty thought, one glorious aspiration after mental distinction or moral utility,—nay, even one improvement in science, or one effort of imagination; for the latter would consign his book to the *index expurgatorius*, and the former, † his person to the prison of the Inquisition.—In a word, where those who slumber *on* the surface of the ground scarce differ from those who slumber *below* it, and the tenant of the soil is like the tenant of the grave. Such is the picture of Italy, the head-quarters of the Roman Catholic religion,—such are the effects of *that* religion where it is permitted to reign unbounded and uncontrolled.”—See REV. MR. MATURIN’S Sermons against the errors of the Roman Catholic Church. Dublin Ed., 1824, page 154-5.

† Galileo for instance, for adopting the Copernican system.

they not strive to participate in those employments? And, would not this rivalry engender appalling animosities, and necessarily produce ominous dissensions? Unless the Sovereign elevated individuals professing this creed, to the highest Constitutional offices, displeasure would be expressed at his Majesty's assumed partiality; unless government appointed them to colonial situations, dissatisfaction would prevail;—unless the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland selected them as privy counsellors, judges, high-sheriffs, and similar influential dignities, violent declamations would be fulminated against the Irish government. The feelings of envy and irritation would not terminate even here. What unpleasant proceedings would inevitably occur in the various corporations? In every city, town, and borough, a constant clashing of interests would appear,—particularly at the annual election of mayors, sheriffs, and other municipal officers. May not this rational apprehension of evils be deemed a criterion of the turmoil and confusion, consequent on “total, unqualified, and unconditional emancipation”—a measure, that, if carried, must blight the renown of these realms, and cause dissatisfaction to arise and prevail in every district. Is it not, therefore, more prudent to perpetuate that system, under which Great Britain has acquired immortal celebrity,—a system calculated to promote the universal happiness, prosperity, and glory of the Nation?

Suppose, however, that the demands of the Roman Catholics were conceded; their laymen ren-

dered eligible to legislate for this Protestant empire; —to be judges, ministers of state, governors of colonies, and lord-lieutenants of Ireland, would the entire body, even then, remain satisfied? Would the priests be content? What advantage would they gain by the admission of laymen to political power, but, as the BISHOP OF CHESTER observes, “*a stepping-stone to those who are bent upon scaling the walls of our Establishment, and depriving us of our immunities and rights.*”* What other conclusion is deducible from their claim of equality with Protestants? And, does the principle terminate, at laymen being appointed to the highest offices in the kingdom,—on the admission of their bishops to the House of Lords,—or even, at the Throne itself? “No,” replies LORD ORIELL, “they will not stop on this concession.”—“The interested feelings of their clergy, whose influence over the minds of their flocks, is peculiarly powerful in the Roman Catholic worship, will urge them to continual exertion for the restoration of tithes. Possessed of them, they would not rest; equality in religion would not satisfy: they would look to the weight of numbers, which their advocates so often dwell on, that the religion of the greater number ought to be the religion of the State. In short, *they would look in the end to raise the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, on the ruins of the Protestant.*”† Does not every pas-

* See Speech of the Bishop of Chester, Protestant Principles, p. 225.

† See Speech of Lord Oriell, Protestant Principles, p. 238.

sing event warrant this apprehension,—does not the experience of every revolving year clearly illustrate the authenticity of this prophetic declaration?

What says Dr. Murray, titular archbishop of Dublin? “It appears,” says he, before the Commons’ Committee, “that when there was a question of obtaining for the Sovereign of this country from the Pope, a limited power of interference in the appointment of Roman Catholic bishops, some persons did urge upon the mind of the Pope, as a reason for obtaining his consent to that arrangement, that *such was the returning spirit of kindness evinced by the British government towards the Irish Catholics, that it was not at all improbable, that in the event of emancipation being granted, the Catholic bishops might be allowed to take their seats in the House of Peers.*”^{*} But, what are the particular expressions of the late Pope Pius the Seventh, in the official letter alluded to by Dr. Murray? “Moreover,” says the Pope, to the Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland, “an additional motive of jealousy must arise in the minds of government towards those of the Catholic creed, from this circumstance, that *the bishops subject to its dominion being rendered by the emancipation, supposing it granted, qualified to sit in Parliament, new precautions might appear necessary to remove all possibility of a doubt concerning their*

^{*} Dr. Murray’s evidence before the Commons’ Committee, May 17th, 1825.

loyalty.”* Must not these declarations of such distinguished individuals in the Roman Catholic Church excite the most painful and portentous apprehensions? Do they not clearly demonstrate the aspiring genius of that religion, which the Protestant House of Commons in their remonstrance to King James I. significantly declared, “hath a restless spirit, and will strive by these gradations. If it once get but a connivance, it will press for a toleration; if that be obtained, they must have an equality; from thence they will aspire to a superiority, and will never rest till they have got a subversion of the true religion.”

Let Protestants contrast these remarks with the

* Pope Pius the Seventh's letter to the Roman Catholic bishops in Ireland, dated 1816. But, that Pope Pius the Seventh only favoured this union for the purpose of exalting the Romish Church appears evident, from the formal instructions on various topics which he issued on the 27th of February, 1809, to the cardinals, archbishops, bishops, and vicars-capitular of France, respecting the reformed churches of that kingdom. In this document, the Pope states, respecting marriage: “Some of you demand from us a dispensation, or power of granting marriages to be contracted between two parties; one of whom professes the Catholic faith, and the other an HERESY (Protestant): but, we suppose you perfectly well know that the *true* Catholic Church, the Church of Jesus Christ, has always strongly reprobated marriages with HERETICS; since the Church *abhors them*, as Clement XI. said, our predecessor of happy memory, ‘ob plurimum deformitatis nec parum spiritualis periculi quod præ se ferunt;’ because of the great dishonour and spiritual danger which they produce. The same laws which prohibit Christians from contracting marriage with Infidels, in like manner forbid Catholics from making SACRILEGIOUS NUPTIALS WITH HERETICS: whence we have been most bitterly afflicted (as our predecessor Benedict XIV. of happy memory was,) to find the Catholics so madly entangled by a shameful passion, as not to abstain FROM SUCH DETESTABLE COALITION, WHICH OUR HOLY MOTHER CHURCH EVER HATH CONDEMNED AND FORBIDDEN.”

ominous events which actually occurred in Ireland, during the period that King James II. *in propria personá* ruled that country, and when the perilous projects of the Roman Catholics were fully realized. The Protestant judges were then removed from the bench, Protestant magistrates from the commission of the peace, Roman Catholics were put into their places; every office of justice from a sheriff to a constable was filled by a Roman Catholic. The corporations were all disfranchised, and new charters granted, by which the King reserved to himself the power of displacing any mayor, alderman or burgess. A parliament met in Dublin—the House of Commons consisted of 228 members, eight of whom only were Protestants; the House of Lords consisted of forty-six members, of whom only eight or nine were Protestants. Their first act was to repeal the Act of Settlement, their next act, was an Act of Attainder,* by which 2,500 Protestants of all ranks and degrees, and of all sexes, were attainted of high treason; “some,” (to use the words of the Roman Catholic Speaker) “upon evidence which had satisfied the House of Commons, *the rest on common fame.*”

* In other Acts of Attainder which have been levelled against individuals of *convicted guilt, and on mature examination of proofs*, the rights of remainder-men and reversioners have naturally been attended to; but this Act of Attainder was distinguished by *confiscating the fee and inheritance where an estate for life was all the property which the persons condemned had in the lands*. The persons attainted were to surrender in November, but Lord Gosworth, the Roman Catholic Chancellor of the day, kept this act in his own possession unprinted and *unpublished* until four months after that November had elapsed; and during that whole period all that was known was, that there were about 2,500 *persons attainted, but who they were, no interest could discover!!!*

The Protestant Provost and Fellows were removed from the University of Dublin, and their places filled by Roman Catholics. An act of Parliament was passed, whereby all tithes payable to the Protestant clergy were to be taken and given to the Priests; and an act was also passed, depriving the Protestants of their churches, in consequence of which, the Cathedral of Christ Church in Dublin, with twenty-six Churches in that diocese, were immediately seized by the Roman Catholics. Orders were sent to the provinces for the same purposes, and no doubt, every church in Ireland would have been in their possession, if the measures of this Roman Catholic Parliament had not been providentially terminated by the battle of the Boyne.

Let the histories of foreign kingdoms be also consulted—particularly, that portion of the history of Poland, commencing with the reign of Sigismund Augustus and continued to the reign of Augustus III.* These must ineffably elucidate the peril-

* This portion of Polish history deserves the perusal of every individual anxious for the stability of our Protestant Constitution, and the happiness of our Protestant kingdom. By a law passed at the diet of Grodno, in 1568, the honours and dignities of the senate, and all the high offices and considerable trusts of the state, and even the crown itself, were laid entirely open to every one, “*of whatever Christian communion or confession soever he be.*” This law conceding an equality of rights to the several religions of the Greek, the Roman, the Lutheran and the Calvinistic churches, was solemnly confirmed, and made a part of the fundamental compact of an union between Poland and the Great Duchy of Lithuania, which was accomplished by Sigismund Augustus. These several religions, then, may be considered as having started fair in the career of emulation. *The Roman Catholics at this time did not bear a proportion in number to the Greeks and Reformed of more than one to seven.* After the death of Sigismund, and

ous consequences which have followed the possession of power by the Roman Catholics. And, these baneful facts must inevitably demonstrate, that similar political and religious power conceded to, and enjoyed by, individuals professing similar tenets, cannot but prove imminently detrimental to the welfare, peace, and happiness of this Protestant empire.

the new-modelling of the state into a republic with an elective crown, the first king on whom the choice of the diet fell, was a Protestant. A perpetual peace was at the same time established between the Greeks, Romanists, and Protestants, as the fundamental law of the republic. This amicable and reciprocal toleration lasted for a short period. But by little and little, the Roman Catholics increased in power, till under Sigismund III. they obtained an evident superiority. That prince had been educated by Jesuits, and during his long reign which lasted for near half a century, all the material interests of the nation were entirely neglected, and intolerance and persecution took the place of those equal and conciliatory laws, to which his predecessor Sigismund Augustus owed his prosperity and his greatness. The churches of the Dissidents were gradually demolished, bishops abandoned their flocks; the priests and people were compelled to follow them. Every gentleman who embraced the Roman Catholic faith, immediately destroyed all the churches of the Dissidents upon his estates. The tradesmen and mechanics dispersed, and the peasants were converted without difficulty. If the priests or any of the vassals were first converted, they were supported against the lord, who was compelled at length by a variety of chicanery and vexations, either to become a convert, or to dispose of his estate. In this manner the Dissidents lost, during the reign of Sigismund, upwards of one hundred churches, and the Roman Catholics increased so fast that, from five only who were members of the senate at the beginning of the reign of Sigismund III., *they amounted at his death to three parts of the whole assembly.* During the succeeding reign, the Dissidents *being much oppressed*, decreased rapidly in their numbers; and *means were at length found to keep them entirely out of the senate.* Besides the laws previously mentioned, *the treaty of Olivia*, in the second article, stipulates:—"That all the subjects of the kingdom of Poland, of what condition or religion soever, were to enjoy for the future, all the rights and privileges as well temporal as spiritual, which they had enjoyed before the war." Yet this treaty was shamefully and disgracefully violated!!!

IV.—THAT, THE SPEECHES AND PUBLICATIONS EMANATING FROM DIVERS MEMBERS OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ASSOCIATION, AND THE PUBLIC TRANSACTIONS OF THIS IMPERIUM IN IMPERIO, ARE DEMONSTRATIVE OF THE UNCONSTITUTIONAL COURSE WHICH ROMAN CATHOLICS WOULD PURSUE, IF EVER THEY POSSESS “TOTAL, UNQUALIFIED, AND UNCONDITIONAL EMANCIPATION.”

Notwithstanding the recent enactment for the suppression of “Unlawful Societies in Ireland,” which was particularly intended to prevent meetings of the Catholic Association, and all bodies acting on similar principles, yet the Roman Catholics of that kingdom have re-organized a “New Association,” which assembles in the metropolis at regular periods—which appoints “secretaries” for conducting its affairs—which discusses the general policy of the nation,—and which has caused a re-collection of that noxious impost on the miserable and distressed—the oppressive and illegal Catholic rent. This body re-assumed its perilous domination under the specious pretext of promoting education. But, that its meetings evidently betoken a far different spirit actuating its members, appears manifest, from the speeches there delivered, and from its general unconstitutional proceedings. For, do not those persons instead of aiming to attain their professed object, frequently promulgate the most virulent harangues against the judicial bench, the magistracy, the Parliament, and the laws? Do they not

calumniate the highest and most spotless private individuals in Great Britain and Ireland? Do they not strive with pernicious ardour, to debase and defame the most illustrious public characters of these realms? Do they not continually declaim against Protestant rights and privileges, conjointly with the benign institutions of this Protestant empire? Have they not commended the ungrateful forty-shilling Roman Catholic freeholders, who ignominiously betrayed the interests of their benefactors, and, by reimbursing those deluded creatures for their "sacrifices" forsooth, do they not encourage equally disgraceful proceedings, whenever opportunities occur? And, is not the "New" Association daily arranging a partial census of those districts in Ireland, principally inhabited by Roman Catholics, dividing the people into religious sects and political parties?

The measures of this imperious society, previous to the late election, manifestly deserve a cursory observation. At that period, resolutions were adopted by this body, with the unanimous accordance of its members, exhorting the Roman Catholic electors to congregate under the banners of the Priests, who were to guide and govern their political conduct during the election. Speeches were fulminated by its avowed leaders, couched in the most revolutionary language, and branding with debasing epithets those representatives who concurred not in their unhallowed views and dissociating principles. Letters were authoritatively written by mem-

bers of this "New" Association, to the Roman Catholic clergy, in various districts, stimulating them to dissever the forty-shilling freeholders from their landlords,—to oppose certain candidates, and to co-operate solely with those, who pledged themselves to support their "total, unqualified, and unconditional" demands.

The leaders of this Association—Mr. O'Connell in the county of Waterford, and Mr. Shiell in the county of Louth—stimulated the adoption of mind-debasing measures, during the elections, which having terminated, they returned to the focus of exasperation and discontent—the metropolitan Catholic Association. Votes of thanks were passed by this body, to the lay and clerical agitators, for their unhallowed and disquieting exertions during the contests, and to the ignoble freeholders who were incessantly panegyricized for betraying their generous, confiding, and beneficent, but misguided, Protestant landlords. Besides, various letters were transmitted to this society by the Roman Catholic Priesthood applauding "the noble-minded and Spartan race," while the Catholic rent was freely disbursed, "to the relief," as a certain political prelate observed, "of that patriotic and incorruptible body, the forty-shilling freeholders, so basely oppressed by bigoted and tyrannical landlords."

But, since we assert that, the proceedings of this "New" Association have already produced disastrous occurrences in Ireland, it must be deemed not unnecessary, to adduce a few specimens of the

speeches delivered, and publications disseminated, by its principal members, as demonstrative of their portentous tendency. To every rational and reflecting mind, these will appear sufficient to arouse public attention to the injurious measures of this Association, and to evince the necessity which imperiously demands its immediate suppression.

“And whence” (said MR. SHIELL) “did that voice which has called up the vigour, the energies, and the virtue of Ireland into animation, and to life—whence did that voice proceed? I do not exaggerate when I say, that we behold in the events which are passing around us, *the results of the Catholic Association.* (Loud cheers.) *We* (I use the word emphatically) *we* have anticipated all these great, these glorious, and useful things; we have roused this most potent spirit—we have awakened the people to the consciousness of their religious and political duty; we have taught them to know their rights, and after having impressed them with a just sense of their value, we have instructed them how to maintain those noble privileges, of which we had taught them to form a lofty estimate. It is not with any feelings of shame that I confess, but *I own with a lofty pride, that we have kindled this great, this wide, this extensive flame, which envelopes the country. We have applied the torch which has set the popular passions on fire.*

“*We* (the Catholic Association) *shall be masters of the representation of Ireland.* We have already driven the faction (*i. e.* Protestants) out of their strong holds, and improving upon *our* success, having acquired a confidence in *our* resources, having learned what union and organization can effect, *we* shall not leave a *single* Orange (Protestant) representative in Ireland. (Cheers.) Look for example, at Louth. In forty-eight hours notice, *we beat the whole Pro-*

testant aristocracy to the ground. I am not given to boasting, but this I may venture to assert, that however unconnected with the county, *I* could, without any considerable exertion, nay, almost with the movement of my finger, have thrown MR. LESLIE FOSTER out of the county. I forbore to make any vigorous exertions against him, in the hope that he may turn the lesson which he has received to good account. But, if he does not—if he is determined to bid defiance to the people (!!!)—if he is not dead to all admonitions, *he never shall represent Louth again.* (Cheers.)

“ If the fountains of bitterness are still left unsealed, it will scarcely be *our* care to check them in their abundance, and to restrain their flow. And how, how in the name of God, is all this to end? Does any man imagine that political events will make a stand and come to a halt? Does any man think that nothing of serious consequence will ensue from all that we behold? *It is not any mere temporary and evanescent excitement which we have attested.*”*

MR. O’CONNELL, in his letter, “ to the Catholics of Ireland,” dated, “ Merrion-square, July 10th, 1826,” thus declaims,

“ Hereditary bondsmen, know ye not,
Who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?”

“ Catholics of Ireland, can any proposition be more clear than this—that we are bound by every tie of *interest, HONOUR, GOOD-FEELING, and CONSCIENCE,*† to afford all practical protection to the freeholders who have achieved *our recent victories?*

“ But resources are wanting—money, the life-spring of all public exertions, is wanting. Individual subscriptions can never be sufficient. It requires a national effort—it requires *the revival of the Catholic rent.* It is true, that some of the

* Speech of Mr. Shiell at the New Catholic Association, July 8th, 1826.

† It is thus printed in the original.

purposes for which the Catholic rent was heretofore instituted are no longer legal—and we will in everything submit to the law. But there remain many useful and national purposes, for which it can and ought to be collected and directed: *the loan-fund to protect the freeholders,—the liberation of every county in Ireland*, where Orange (Protestant) influence still predominates, and, above all, the great and important object of national education.

“The Catholic people of Ireland are a nation. *They should have something in the nature of a national treasury.* For these purposes, I call on the Catholics, and the liberal Protestants (!!!) of Ireland, to form *a national fund*, to be called “*The New Catholic Rent* for all purposes not prohibited by law, and especially the purpose of national education.”

“Let that be the title of the *New Rent*. Who will begin to collect it? The Catholic clergy I doubt not. The people are so attached to their clergy—they are so docile in the hands of that clergy—they will so readily obey the advice, and follow the instructions of that clergy, at a period like the present, when they are not inflamed by any bad passion, nor driven to madness by any irritating oppression. In such a state of the public mind, *the people will cheerfully obey the voice of the clergy, pointing out to them their political duties.*

“My anxious wish is, that the collection of the “*New Catholic Rent*,” in each parish, may be taken under the care and inspection of the parish Priest, or of one of his reverend assistants. *The enumeration of the people can be very well combined with the collection of the rent.* It is desirable that this “*New Rent*” should be collected *on the same scale as the old.* One farthing a week, one penny a month, one shilling a year.”

“Daniel O’Connell,

“OF THE ORDER OF LIBERATORS.”*

* The sixth rule of this order of Liberators is,—“To promote the acquisition of such (Forty-Shilling) Franchise, and its due registry; to ascer-

Such is a specimen of the taunting language used—such, the perilous course pursued by the zealous partisans of this “New” Catholic Association. Whether either be conducive to the tranquillity of Ireland—whether the clarion of triumph over the Protestant aristocracy and people, be sounded with heedlessness and inattention by a hostile combination, must be determined by those whose imperative duty it is to superintend, generally, the public affairs of the empire, but particularly, by the guardians of that important portion—the kingdom of Ireland.

If the proceedings of this imperious body were duly investigated, they would indubitably demonstrate the necessity of further restrictive measures being immediately enacted and enforced. Why should there be the least procrastination? Ought not Parliament to interfere, when a most fearful association exists in the United Kingdom, infringing on its privileges, and governing, in fact, “the (Roman) Catholic people of Ireland,” whom Mr. O’Connell terms “a nation?” Ought Parliament to hesitate suppressing those who have engendered, and continue propagating, discontent and disaffection in the

tain the number of voters in each county and city in Ireland, and the political bias of the voters generally.” And the seventh rule is, “To promote the system of dealing exclusively with the friends of civil and religious liberty, (*i. e.* the supporters of their demands) Protestant and Catholic,” &c. &c.

The third regulation for admission to this Order states that—“Every person desirous of becoming a “Liberator,” must apply for that purpose to the *Catholic rent collectors* of the city or county of Waterford, and obtain the signature of seven of them.” And, 4th,—“No collector to be entitled to sign a certificate for a ‘Liberator,’ unless he has been for three months engaged in the Catholic rent collection.”

land? Has not Mr. Shiell declared, that “we (the Association) have applied the torch which has set the popular passions on fire;” that “we (the Association) shall be masters of the representation of Ireland;” and that, “we (the Association) beat the whole Protestant aristocracy to the ground?” Ought Parliament to tolerate that this body “should have something in the nature of a national treasury;” and that it should collect rent, as “a loan-fund to protect the freeholders?” Is it expedient—is it just—is it consistent with the welfare of Ireland, that the “New” Catholic Association should be allowed to continue its hebdomadal meetings in the metropolis of that kingdom, as a rallying point for the disaffected, and an arena for promulging the most disloyal, irreligious, and demoralizing sentiments?*

But, who are the principal declaimers—who, the

* At the New Catholic Association, September 19th, 1826, Mr. Lawless said, “the Association should know their expenditure—not only what was given to agents in Ireland, but to *agents in England*. He did not know any man more useful than Mr. Æneas M'Donnell, but it was for the Association to consider, if it was necessary to give £300 per annum to Mr. M'Donnell or not.”

Mr. O'Gorman stated, at the New Catholic Association, November 21st, 1826, the expenses of the body (exclusive of Mr. M'Donnell, *who incurs very large expenses besides his salary*) to be nearly as follows:

Rent of room, &c.	£200	0	0
Porters, &c.	100	0	0
Expenses of aggregate meetings	50	0	0
Advertisements	1,000	0	0!!!
Mr. O'Dwyer's (secretary) salary	200	0	0
	<hr/>		
	£1,550	0	0 per ann.

Is not Mr. O'Dwyer a regular officer of this society? Is not Mr. M'Donnell another officer of this association? If so, do not these facts render this association illegal? Why then is it not suppressed?

ostensible directors—who, the democratic leaders of the New Catholic Association? “Daniel O’Connell, of the Order of Liberators,” pampered by the fulsome adulation of the fickle-minded, guides and governs the illiberal and calumniating host. Adhering to no fixed political principles, he suffers that judgment, which should dispassionately contemplate the real situation of the country, to be warped by prejudices of the illiterate, and renders that reason, which should be discreetly exercised, subservient to their views and designs. Emulous of being deemed a popular leader, he commingles with the humblest classes of society, and, if aught he displeases the lay and reverend compeers, publicly recants the offensive declarations to lull the suspicious, and to gratify his sycophantic admirers. To-day, condemning the Veto, he spurns those who maintain an adverse opinion—to-morrow, discarding those ideas, on finding them uncherished by the ignorant, he assails with greater virulence, the advocates of sentiments similar to those which he previously promulged. To-day, commending the press, he encourages the conductors of this influential and potent-working engine, to laud and propagate particular tenets—to-morrow, deserting the misguided, he indulges in vehement tirades against the Constitutional palladium of British liberty, and ferrets out some obsolete statute, with the intention of prosecuting public journalists for descanting on public measures. To-day, lamenting the existence of party spirit among Irishmen, and the wearing particular colours,

as badges of distinction—to-morrow, establishing new party societies, he travels through the provinces of Ireland, caparisoned in green ribbons, and with medals, &c. exhorting the people to become party-men, to wear particular badges, and to enrol themselves members of his new-fangled “Order of Liberators.” To-day, reprobating before the highest tribunals in the State, the irreligious recklessness with which certain freeholders forswear themselves—to-morrow, in strains of unexampled adulation, and for mere electioneering purposes, he eulogizes their relentless and ignominious ingratitude. To-day, advocating the measures of administration, he lauds the Government and their sincere supporters—to-morrow, he maligns the members of this identical administration, and applauds the conduct of their heartless revilers and opponents. To-day, declaiming in behalf of religious toleration, he praises Protestants of various denominations—to-morrow, he denounces divers dissenting sects, besides the doctrines of the Established Church,* conjointly with its venerable clergy, noble peers, eloquent senators, and others, the most illus-

* Mr. O'Connell, in a letter addressed to the REV. ROBERT DALY, rector of Powerscourt, dated Merrion-square, 22d May, 1826, concludes thus:—“I should like to have attacked your creed by argument—that is—if I could possibly discover what that creed is. If you have not made more scanty, *the already scanty belief of the Established Church*. If this be not so, and that you adhere to the tenets of the Church as by law established, I should I confess, like to attack, by some argument, *its creed of shifts, and compromises, and contradictions*. I should like to expose that most melancholy and deplorable system of asserting, in Articles of Belief for the mature, and in Catechisms for the young, tenets which are denied in your pulpits, and contradicted by your individual instructions. Finally, if I had time and opportunity, I think I would satisfy every rational man, that quite independently of the question, whether or not the doctrine of the Catholic

trious individuals in Great Britain and Ireland. And yet, "Daniel O'Connell, of the Order of Libe-
rators," plumes himself on being consistent, as well
as, an advocate of civil and religious liberty!!!
Credat Julæus Apella non ego!

Mr. Shiell, another director of the New Catholic Association, aims at the acquisition of wealth and fame, by uttering declamatory harangues, compiled to tickle the ear, and to delude the judgment. A political and religious enthusiast, he vehemently rants against the benevolent and philanthropic, who are daily extirpating vicious, immoral, and insurrectionary habits from the Irish peasantry. Frequently, has he endeavoured to mystify the past misdeeds of his party, which develop their unhallowed and Jesuitical designs, and as frequently, has he disseminated the poisonous seeds of envy, hatred, malice, and uncharitableness, among the misinformed and seduced. His splenetic sarcasms—his reproachful calumnies—his mind-debasing denunciations, at a public festival, and in the moment of conviviality, against the beloved and ever-to-be-lamented Duke of York, were only paralleled by "a vindication," more malicious and yet more libellous, uttered from that pandemonium of detraction—the New Catholic Association. A pleader for "emancipation," he suffers few, if any, to maintain opinions different from himself, without reproving their private con-

Church be true—it is as morally impossible but that the Established Church must be false, as it is that contradictory propositions should co-exist, or that black and white should be one and the same colour."

"DANIEL O'CONNELL."

duct, and distorting their public motives of action.* But, it palsies the imagination to reflect on the perilous tendency of the declamations and rhapsodies of this fastidious self-constituted champion of civil and religious liberty!!! Inferior to O'Connell in wrangling and disputation, Shiell far surpasses him in mischievous flights of fancy, and in drawing perverted deductions from fallacious misconceptions and the most incredulous testimony. He requires not the aid of facts, to address an aggregate meeting of any sect or party, but harangues on assumptions, as if each word were infallible as holy writ. Detected and exposed, he veers not like O'Connell, by publicly recanting his former positions, but assigns in extenuation, that the offensive epithets were "the mere bubble of the mind,"† and a poetical privilege in forming and fulminating "rhetorical artifices."‡

Such are the directors of the New Catholic Association—such, the fomenters of discontent among the Irish people—such, the individuals who, if what

* This person exhibited an instance of his *liberal* genius, at a late Aggregate Meeting in Dublin, May 2d, 1827, where he promulgated the most fulsome tirade and intolerant observations respecting the noble-minded and consistent ELDON, WELLINGTON, WESTMORELAND, BATHURST, PEEL, and other Constitutional Protestants.

† This was the only excuse pleaded by Mr. Shiell for his calumnious observations against the Duke of York, and the orator, at the same time, spoke most violently against the royal personage.

‡ Mr. Shiell, in his evidence before the Committee of the House of Commons, (p. 92,) in exculpation of certain remarks made by him on Mr. Peel, stated, "I did not state in public that Kirwan received no reward; but perhaps I was guilty of *some rhetorical artifice*, in not adding, that he received the reward of £30."

is named "Roman Catholic emancipation" were conceded, would aspire to government-offices of honour, of trust, of emolument, and of power. Would their avowed principles accord with our national policy? Would they be suitable legislators, or administrators of the law for the Protestant Church, and the maintenance of Protestant rights? Would they uphold those measures which characterize this Protestant empire as the resplendent sun of patriotism—as the munificent refuge of the oppressed of every nation? Would they uniformly co-operate with Protestant legislators, for the defence of Protestant principles, and the support of Protestant states? Would they not rather be actuated by a similar shuttle-cock system as at present, and changing their opinions to please the inexperienced, endeavour to forward the ambitious projects of the Roman Catholic Church? Would they not strive to render that church—which being the colossus of tyranny and oppression in former ages, still continues to maintain its intolerable power in Roman Catholic kingdoms—the Established religion of England and Ireland? Would they—but, persevering in similar observations is needless, their public demeanour and professed principles indubitably demonstrate the course which Roman Catholics would pursue, if ever they possess "total, unqualified, and unconditional emancipation" in this Protestant empire.

*"Jam tenet Italiam, tamen ultra pergere tendit
Actum, inquit, nihil est, nisi Pæno milite portas
Frangimus et mediâ vexillum pono suburrâ."*

V.—THAT, DURING THE RECENT ELECTIONS IN IRELAND, THE ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTHOOD EXERCISED AN INAUSPICIOUS AND UNDUE INFLUENCE OVER THEIR FLOCKS, AND MANIFESTED SYMPTOMS OF SPIRITUAL DOMINATION OVER THEIR COMMUNICANTS, FOR THE UNDISGUISED ATTAINMENT OF POLITICAL PURPOSES.

The intermeddling spirit, and unconstitutional interference of the Roman Catholic Priesthood in political affairs, were indubitably evidenced during the recent elections in Ireland. Every portentous power of their church—its ecclesiastical censures—its imposing rites—its excommunicating denunciations,—besides, various priestly artifices, were combined to effect the return of those candidates, who pledged themselves to support the Roman Catholic claims. Rallying beneath the banners of an illegal association, and stimulated in their operations by interested demagogues, the Priests contributed in propagating the most dangerous principles and dissociating tenets. They arrayed an ignorant peasantry against their natural benefactors, and in numerous instances, dissolved the social compact which subsisted between members of the same family, and inmates under the same roof.

Previous to the various contests, the Roman Catholic Priesthood publicly canvassed the forty-shilling freeholders of their communion, in behalf of *their* respectively favoured candidates. The landlords were generally divested of every species of influence

over their tenantry. The Priests required an implicit obeisance—an unequivocal compliance with their commands, which were frequently extorted under apprehensions of temporal chastisement and spiritual denunciations. Every tie of nature, duty, interest, and affection were dissevered, besides the most baneful consequences entailed on the misguided and seduced. At the hustings, the meek, and modest, and maligned Priests also appeared, lauding those who exercised the franchise in accordance with their dictates, but fulminating denunciations against the dauntless and disobedient.

By these and similar means, the Roman Catholic Priesthood induced immense numbers to vote for *their* candidates, while hundreds, being unwilling to disoblige their benefactors, were scared from employing a privilege, vested in the people by the laws of the realm, except at the peril of everything estimable in the solaces of religion, and in danger of being disunited from neighbours, friends, parents, and children. What could counterpoise this pernicious, intermeddling, and accursed spirit? What can extenuate the unconstitutional interference of a clerical body fettering the consciences of their communicants, and persuading them, by the terrors of another world, their religious prejudices, and the displeasure of their church, to promote the return of members to the British Senate.

But, whatever melancholy consequences have resulted from these proceedings, one great, and important, and inestimable advantage has been derived.

The Roman Catholic Priesthood* can no longer disguise the astounding fact of their interference in political matters—an interference unexampled in the annals of any kingdom, and totally incompatible with their clerical profession. These elections afford numerous confirmatory proofs of this circumstance, together with the insidious modes of consummation. Besides the instances hitherto noticed, the Priests displayed an unusual tact in guiding and addressing mobs—in violating the freedom of election—co-operating in popular processions—and, even at the booths, performing the duties of political agents. Never were an ignorant peasantry so trepanned by clerical artifices—never were their intellects rendered more subservient to the machinations of an imperious Priesthood. And, do not these facts afford irrefragable proof, that the Roman Catholic Church with its lording and ambitious designs, still engenders in its priestly fraternity, that portentous interference in political concerns, for which it has been so long and imminently distinguished?

To demonstrate more conspicuously, the infringe-

* “Who is it,” asks the constitutional and eloquent GEORGE ROBERT DAWSON, “that is employed to sow distrust between the clergyman and his parishioners?—*the Priests*. Who is it that bursts without remorse all the ties of connexion between the landlord and the tenant?—*the Priests*. Who leads on contending parties at elections, and, in addition to political animosity, throws on the fuel of religious hatred? who impedes the course of education, and blasts the efforts of the most benevolent individuals for the civilization of their tenantry?—It is *the Priests*. In every situation, in every character, the Priest appears as a foe, unless the object to be obtained conduces to the advancement of his own power.”—See Speech of Mr. Dawson, “Protestant Principles,” p. 198.

ment of the Roman Catholic Priesthood on the popular rights and privileges connected with the elective franchise, it must be deemed not inopportune, to insert here, a few of the fearless declarations of those candidates who were supported by the Protestant interest, and of those representatives, who being elected, despite of clerical intrigue, are determined to persevere in advocating Protestant principles. Those illustrious individuals have manfully proclaimed the audacious manner in which Roman Catholic freeholders were seduced from their benevolent landlords, and the unconstitutional frenzy which stimulated the Priests to the most abhorrent acts of ecclesiastical domination.

“The Roman Catholic Priesthood of the country,” said Colonel Leslie, late M.P. for the county of Monaghan, and a candidate for this county at the last election, “have superseded the privileges of the electors. They have thrown aside every outward restraint, and in defiance of all decorum, propriety, and social order, have openly, *under the colour of spiritual authority, usurped the elective franchise.* It is unnecessary for me to detail the events of the election, the baneful effects of the system pursued will be long felt in this country. The tie between landlord and tenant has been dissolved, and the gentry and landed proprietors have been totally bereft of their political influence, and as you very properly observe, *the entire representation has been thrown into the hands of the Roman Catholic Clergy.*”*

* Colonel Leslie's Answer to an Address from the “Landed Proprietors and Gentlemen of the County of Monaghan,” which concludes thus.—“During the election we saw the Catholic Association and *the Priests*

Mr. Fortescue, a candidate at the late election for the county of Louth also declared:—"Although I have not succeeded in the object of my wishes, their kindness (gentry and landlords) and exertions to carry their promises into effect will ever be remembered with gratitude by me. That they have failed in their wishes is, I am convinced, attributable to *the existing influence of an Association, which, in unison with the Roman Catholic Clergy, has been for the present successful in inducing the deluded peasantry of the country to act in violation of the wishes, and thus withdraw themselves from the countenance and paternal care of their landlords, to whom they have ever hitherto looked up with confidence and respect. I shall not regret the result of this contest, if it has the effect, as I hope it will, of opening the eyes of many besides myself, to the real state in which the Irish peasantry at present stand, and must remain, so long as the Roman Catholic Clergy are allowed to use for political purposes, their spiritual influence.*"*

Such were a few of the fearless declarations of those candidates, † who being supported by the Pro-

urging the populace by menace, imprecations, and terror of their lives and property, to forward their views; and this done openly as well as privately, and to an alarming extent, the result of which, we apprehend, must ultimately terminate in *these people virtually and absolutely sending forward the representatives for many, if not, the greater number of counties in Ireland.*" Colonel Leslie was advised by his committee to resign, in consequence, as the chairman, Colonel Mayne, states, "of the unconstitutional and disgraceful, but yet extensive influence of the *Roman Catholic Priesthood*, in detaching from you the great mass of the Roman Catholic freeholders of your friends."

* Mr. Fortescue's address to the electors of Louth, July 4th, 1826.

† A detail of the numerous priestly devices, employed at the Waterford and Westmeath elections, is subjoined in the Appendix to "Protestant Principles," from the petitions of Lord George Beresford, and Mr. Smyth, to the House of Commons.

testant interest in divers contests, the machinations of the Roman Catholic Priesthood were consequently directed against them, and proved unfortunately successful. But, what say those representatives, who, despite the unconstitutional interference of this Priesthood, were elected by the Protestant interest, to advocate and maintain in the British Senate, the Protestant principles of their respective constituents.

Mr. Foster, M.P. for the county of Louth, addressed the electors thus:—" You have witnessed the unrelenting system by which I have been denounced, not merely throughout every parish, but almost within every cottage of our county, and the exertions of that authority which has so lavishly superadded all the terrors of another world, to every art of intimidation that can be practised in this. If we have to lament some necessary consequences of the introduction of *a power hitherto un contemplated by the British Constitution*, at least, it has not taken away from me the opportunity of thanking you, gentlemen, for the manifestation of that, as yet unbroken spirit, on your part, to which I am indebted for success."

And, Mr. Maxwell, M.P. for the county of Cavan, thus addressed the electors:—" Gentlemen, were the election in which we have been engaged of an ordinary description, I might content myself with returning you my most grateful thanks for the support which I have experienced. But, gentlemen, during the contest which has just ended, you have witnessed proceedings hitherto unparalleled in the history of elections. You have seen the spiritual powers of the Romish Church openly employed for the promotion of political objects. You have seen priests converted into furious

demagogues, inciting their flocks to hatred of their fellow-Christians, and ingratitude to their benefactors. What a scene did the first day of the election exhibit? You beheld the Roman Catholic pastors marching into the county-town at the head of their respective flocks. You heard them denouncing eternal damnation against every one who withheld their support from their favourite candidates. You saw upwards of *forty* of these spiritual crusaders mixing with the mob, and, by their inflammatory harangues, stimulating them to acts of violence and outrage. You saw not unfrequently the tallies of our opponents brought up to the polling booths with a Priest in front, and another in the rear. Nay, several voters were by actual force dragged by them into the tally rooms, and compelled to vote against their wishes. In short, *there was no species of intimidation, whether spiritual or secular, that was not resorted to, to effect their purpose.* But, your energy and zeal rendered their fury impotent, and they have been defeated with disgrace.

“The conduct of the Romish Clergy, at this election, has afforded a practical illustration of the fallacy of the testimony given by their Prelates before the Committees of both Houses of Parliament. It was there sworn, that the power of the Romish Church was exclusively confined to spiritual affairs, and that it did not, in any way, extend to temporal concerns; but, if the deluded Roman Catholics are taught to believe that the Romish Church possesses the keys of heaven, and that the ministers of that persuasion can shut its gates against any person who acts in opposition to their commands in the exercise of the elective franchise,—is it possible to credit such testimony? No, gentlemen, let us not deceive ourselves. *The Romish Church has ever used, and will ever use, all its spiritual powers to effectuate its political objects*—the most prominent of which is, (as has been openly and repeatedly avowed,) the subversion of the Established

Church, and the Protestant Constitution of these realms. Let it not be said, that we, who wish to withhold from it the power of effecting its mischievous purposes, are intolerant, or that we deny our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects an exercise of political power on account of their religious opinions. It is not their belief in abstract points of doctrine, that in our eyes forms the barrier between them and the full enjoyment of all the privileges of the Constitution; but it is the utter prostration of their intellect, their submission in temporal, as well as spiritual matters, to an intriguing, intolerant, and ambitious Priesthood, that renders them unfit guardians of public liberty. Look back to history—look at the present times, and see if you can find a single instance in which the Church of Rome has favoured, or even tolerated, civil and religious liberty. I should hail with delight the real emancipation of our deluded countrymen from its baneful influence—from the disgraceful thralldom in which they are held. Then, indeed, might all be safely admitted to a full participation of civil privileges, and although we might continue to differ upon some abstract points of religious faith, we should form a loyal, happy, and united people.”

Such were the unequivocal declarations of those esteemed advocates of Protestant principles—such, the avowals of those representatives elected by the Protestant interest, notwithstanding the unconstitutional interference of the Roman Catholic Priesthood. And, do not these facts, recited by the unsuccessful candidates, and the triumphant representatives, indubitably demonstrate that baneful species of spiritual domination which the Priests have assumed over their unenlightened communicants for political purposes? Do they not prove an

unconstitutional infringement on the rights and privileges connected with the elective franchise? Do they not elucidate the perilous control which may be exercised at any period, or for any purposes, be they ever so dangerous and abhorrent, by this clerical body over their communicants? Is it, therefore, politic that such conduct should be tolerated in a nation—whose laws are founded on civil liberty, and in a kingdom, whose Constitution and Government are essentially Protestant?*

Let these facts be impartially investigated, but diligently considered. Occurrences so novel and momentous should be viewed in respect both to their moral tendency, and their natural political consequences. What do they prove and unquestionably establish? That the Roman Catholic Priesthood have exerted their spiritual influence for

* COLONEL J. IRWIN stated before the Lords' Committee, 19th May, 1825, that the manner in which the Roman Catholic Clergy exercise their influence in his neighbourhood is, "in general, by denying their flocks or followers what are called rites of the Church; not admitting them to confession, and, in some instances, by withdrawing ordinary accommodations; as in the parish in which I live, the Priest told some persons, who were objecting to pay the Roman Catholic rent, that he would not go to their houses to perform the ceremony of marriage or christening, but that they must come to him at the altar. There are other instances in the county, (Sligo), there was one recently, which was tried at the last quarter sessions but the jury could not agree, in which the Priest is charged with having struck a man for refusing to pay the Roman Catholic rent. There are other instances; in respect to marriage, they not unfrequently interfere. I should here be desirous to add *the power of excommunication*, which has been not unfrequently exercised in the county of Sligo with effect *and temporal injury* to the parties excommunicated. In two cases actions were brought, and some compensation was obtained; but the parties who brought the actions had subsequently to leave the country."

the attainment of temporal objects—that they have unconstitutionally interfered with the return of representatives to the British Senate—that they have violated the freedom of election—that they have caused immense numbers of freeholders to vote in accordance with their dictates, and against their benevolent landlords—and, that by threats, imprecations, and clerical artifices, they have rendered an ignorant peasantry subservient to their political views and designs.

Besides, these facts demonstrate the perilous situation in which the Roman Catholic forty-shilling freeholders are placed. The landlord, on the one hand, claims their votes for numerous benefits entailed—while the Priests, obtruding their religion, generally sway the minds of the unfortunate tenants, who are consequently exposed to the natural displeasure of the landed proprietor. “The only parties,” says Mr. Foster, “that ever come into contact, in deciding which way a Roman Catholic forty-shilling freeholder shall vote, are the landlord and the Priest.” “I have no doubt that *the Priests could drive the landlord out of the field*. I think they have done it wherever they have tried. The consequences are extremely to be deprecated, in reference to the unfortunate tenantry. Subsequent to the election, the landlord necessarily loses the good feeling which otherwise he might have had towards the individual who has deserted him; the rent is called for; and it is in vain for the voter to look to his late advisers for any assistance to meet it. There

have fallen within my own knowledge, frequent instances of the tenants having been destroyed, in consequence of their having voted with their clergy." "*Their motive is religious enthusiasm. They have been told in terms, that it is a contest between God and their landlords.*"

When the Roman Catholic Priesthood have interfered so illegally, and unjustifiably, for the return of Protestant members, may not their demeanour be rationally anticipated, if that interference were to be exerted for the election of Roman Catholic representatives? How would they *then* deport themselves, when instructed by their episcopal superiors, to subvert in every possible manner, the Protestant interest, for the attainment of religious objects, or of temporal aggrandizement? It is equally unnatural and absurd to suppose, that they would prove less sedulous in canvassing the electors—in dissolving the ancient and heretofore sacred connexion between landlord and tenant—in fettering the consciences of their deluded communicants—in requiring implicit obedience to their mandates—in excommunicating their opponents—and, in promoting by every possible mode, the return of their religio-political laymen. No: all their prowess would be concentrated towards their portentous designs. Does not this appear manifest from the extraordinary zeal displayed in behalf of Protestant members? And, does it not necessarily follow, that a more chivalrous and enthusiastic ardour would be evinced, to effectuate the return of persons pro-

fessing similar political principles and maintaining similar religious tenets with themselves? This undue interference—this inauspicious influence—this spiritual domination, should therefore be obviated, and vigilantly guarded against by the vigorous, beneficent, and unanimous co-operation of our Protestant Parliament.

VI.—THAT THE ROMAN CATHOLIC FORTY-SHILLING FREEHOLDERS, HAVING VIOLATED THE ORIGINAL OBJECT, WHICH THE LEGISLATURE CONTEMPLATED, WHEN CONCEDED TO THEIR BODY THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE, THEY HAVE THEREFORE INCAPACITATED THEMSELVES FROM BEING RETAINED IN POSSESSION OF THIS PRIVILEGE—THIS PORTION OF THE ELECTIVE FRANCHISE SHOULD CONSEQUENTLY BE REMODELLED, OR THE AMOUNT OF FREEHOLD QUALIFICATION INCREASED.

Never was inquiry into the principles and actions of the Roman Catholic forty-shilling freeholders more requisite than at present—never was investigation more opportunely demanded. What, heretofore, was theoretically alleged against this class of society, has been lately realized to the most accurate and practical demonstration. No possible doubt can exist in any rational mind of the perilous consequences which must ensue the continuance of the elective franchise in the possession of those, who suffer their intellects to be swayed by relentless bigotry, and whose every movement contravenes the original intention of the legislature in con-

ceding to their body, this great, and, if duly exercised, important constitutional privilege.

When the elective franchise was extended to the Roman Catholic peasantry, it was never contemplated that those obtaining the power of voting from benevolent landlords, would exercise the privilege in violation of a sacred compact, or in direct opposition to the private wishes and public interests of their benefactors. The legislature never surmised such unparalleled ingratitude, nor that those freeholders would be seduced from their best-friends and natural protectors, by the insidious machinations of an intermeddling political Priesthood.

But, since this heterogeneous and demoralizing system was pursued during the late elections in Ireland, the facts connected therewith, should be suitably considered. What can appear more revolting to human nature—more abhorrent to every generous disposition, than to find hundreds of the most unfortunate, yet misguided, peasantry, publicly opposing those landlords, who, not only invested them with a power of voting, but frequently contributed towards their relief from the most imminent perils and poverty? This ungrateful conduct has certainly been exemplarily punished; but would it not be gracious and paternal-like in the legislature to interpose its beneficent authority, in order to prevent the seduction of an ignorant peasantry from their landlords by any clerical body, and the mis-haps that must consequently result, while the present system is continued?

“ The forty-shilling freeholder in Ireland,” says the honourable Mr. Justice Day, “ votes out of a lease, and that lease is of the smallest possible quantity of property, either perhaps a cabin or a very small piece of ground for a potato garden, and out of that, on which he barely subsists, it is that this independent constituent is supposed to be entitled to vote; he is registered upon his positive affidavit out of his wretched holding, as a freehold worth *forty shillings* a year; this surely is but *a mockery of a freehold*. He and his brethren are driven by the landlord* into the hustings, as a salesman drives the flock into the market. *They have no will, property, judgment, or knowledge of their own, to guide or govern them*. Those forty-shilling freeholders are very unlike indeed to the constitutional freeholders and constituents of England of the same denomination, who all vote out of inheritances and independent properties, more or less; that is a species of property unknown in Ireland among those wretched forty-shilling freeholders. The system is a sort of *universal suffrage*; thus *the beggary of the country elects, and the property of the country is entirely out of the case.*”†

Between the forty-shilling freeholders of Britain, and those of Ireland, there is an evident and important difference. In England, electors of this class obtain the right of voting for members of Parliament, from either a fee-simple, an hereditary or acquired land-freehold; whereas, in Ireland, according to Mr. Blake, “ they pay what is originally a rack-rent for the land, they then build mud huts upon it, and if they make out of the land *a profit of*

* The scene is reversed. The Priests have usurped and now exercise the authority, which the landlord formerly had.

† Evidence of the honourable Judge Day before the Parliamentary Committee, June 2d, 1824.

forty shillings a year, a profit produced by the sweat of their brow, they reconcile themselves to swear that they have an interest in it to the extent of forty shillings a year, whereas the gain is produced not through an interest in the land, but through their labour." In England, the freeholders, after deducting the various expenses attendant on their land, exercise the privilege of voting from the actual and absolute possession of freehold property to the amount of *forty shillings* and upwards; but in Ireland, numerous instances occur, where the peasantry exercise this privilege, from solely occupying at a rack-rent, a most incommodious cabin without any land whatever. In England, the freehold is acquired from an hereditary estate, a rent charge, or the purchase of extensive landed property; in Ireland, the lower classes generally neither inherit the freehold from their forefathers, nor acquire it by industrious habits, but obtain it under an implied condition, or a positive pledge. In England, the freeholders *bonâ fide* represent the landed property of the kingdom—they need no pecuniary aid from their more opulent neighbours, and consequently vote free and unshackled; but, in Ireland, they are generally devoid of substantial property,—obsequious dependants on the generosity of the wealthy, and have uniformly voted in accordance with the inclinations and interests of the donors, until the Roman Catholic Priesthood lately interfered, and gained over their unenlightened communicants, an untoward political electioneering interest.

This anomalous situation of the forty-shilling freeholders in both kingdoms requires amendment, demands assimilation. That the Irish electors of this class, differ widely from those in England, must be evident to every dispassionate and reflecting mind. "Their (the Irish) creation was in fact," according to Mr. Littleton, "a fraud on the spirit of the law and of the Constitution; because, by their great numbers, they keep down the real freeholders of the country. They effectually suppress the expression of public opinion on the part of that body, because whatever they may feel as to a fitness of the candidate, they could neither return nor reject him, if the great body of the forty-shilling freeholders were opposed to their wishes. The freeholders are *not like the land freeholders* of this country, (England) the strength and honour of the nation; they are, on the contrary, *its weakness and discredit, for they ruin the very property which rears them.*" Is it not, therefore, advisable to remove this difference, to assimilate the elective franchise of Ireland to that of Great Britain?

The inexpediency of the present forty-shilling freehold system in Ireland is unquestionable. It has long continued the principal of the various evils that unhappily depress the internal condition of that country. Judge Day declares, the "rage for forty-shilling freeholders leads to all manner of offences and vices, to perjury, drunkenness, bribery, rioting, and idleness." It has generated a subdivision of land into the smallest possible portions, for the sole

purpose of creating votes. Whenever leases of large tracts of ground expire, the landlords have frequently subdivided the farms into parcels, for the sole purpose of creating new freeholds. It has destroyed the bond of union between landlord and tenant; it has tended to increase a very numerous population, for which there exists no adequate employment; besides, inducing an uneducated peasantry to become land-owners, and like a pestiferous brood to swarm and impoverish the soil.

The Legislature, however, after considering those portentous evils, should interpose its benign authority to meliorate this portion of the elective franchise, to prevent an ignorant peasantry from being seduced into demoralizing misdeeds by the political management of their Priests, and being subsequently castigated by the landlords for their baleful ingratitude. That the spiritual interference of any clerical body in electioneering matters, is dangerous to the tranquillity and welfare of the realm cannot be denied. If then, such intermeddling has actually occurred, should not the means by which it was effected, be annulled? And, ought not the various defects in this forty-shilling freehold system which has been proved so baneful to the peace of the country, so noxious to the morals of the people, be also removed?

Mr. Shiell declared, respecting raising the qualification of the elective franchise: "I further think, that so far from its being an injury, it would be a benefit to the lower orders, that the qualification should be raised, and that the mass

of the peasantry should not be invested, every five or six years, with the mere resemblance of political authority which does not naturally belong to them, and which is quite unreal." Mr. O'Connell was asked, "Do you think the raising the qualification to ten pounds would be productive of great benefit to Ireland?—I think it would be productive of benefit. It is, in my humble judgment, no small benefit if you get rid of any portion of *perjury*; and it is the commencement of what we want so much in Ireland, a substantial yeomanry: at present, the population is too much divided between the highest and the very lowest class." And, Mr. Blake stated: "I think it (the want of a respectable yeomanry,) is one main cause of the evils that the country labours under, and my notion in recommending a change in the qualification for the exercise of the elective franchise, is materially influenced by the hope, that it would induce gentlemen who wish to have political influence in Ireland, instead of parcelling out their land amongst a *mob of wretched cottiers*, to raise up and encourage the growth of a respectable yeomanry in the country."*

An amendment of this portion of the elective franchise is, therefore, requisite, unless it be desirable to propagate dissension among the people; to indulge professional agitators with an opportunity for disseminating their dissociating principles; to encourage the Roman Catholic Priesthood in fulminating spiritual denunciations against those who disobey their commands; and to promote a more general disorganization of the ancient and heretofore salutary connexion between landlord and tenant. A recurrence of those evils, unhappily the soul-harrowing source of discord, and bone of con-

* See Minutes of Evidence on the State of Ireland.

tention between the gentry and peasantry, should be prevented by the alleviating and efficient power of the Imperial Parliament.

But, the question of precautionary restrictions should not be considered, as peculiarly connected with Ireland. The British public must also feel itself interested in its successful result. If the Roman Catholics ever possess an opportunity, may not Britons reasonably expect among themselves similar pernicious operations? And, would not equally appalling consequences ensue, the natural connexion between landlord and tenant dissolved, mobs impeding the freedom of election, merciless bigots over-awing those who purpose voting in compliance with the impulses of gratitude and of conscience, the electors' property subsequently distrained and sold, while their families become beggared, destitute, and starving?

If this gloomy picture of misery and misfortune be actually produced in Ireland, by the undue exercise of a privilege, the character of which has been sullied, and its value depreciated, would it not be consonant with the noblest feelings of humanity, for the Legislature to intercede between the ignorance and the prejudices of those misguided individuals, and to render them unexposed, for the future, to similar mishaps consequent on their election misdeeds? To effectuate this philanthropic object, the forty-shilling freehold system must be thoroughly investigated, the facts of its inefficiency and perversion assiduously ex-

amined ; if substantiated, let it be remodelled, let the amount of qualification be increased, or new measures adopted, that will relieve the poor peasant from vicious temptation ; that will curb the interference of the Priests, and restore the landed interest to the natural influence arising from property, and finally, re-establish the happiness, the prosperity, and the welfare of Ireland.

VII.—THAT THE WISEST STATESMEN, AND MOST DISTINGUISHED PROTESTANTS OF THE PAST AGE, WERE DECIDEDLY OPPOSED TO A “ TOTAL, UNQUALIFIED, AND UNCONDITIONAL ” CONCESSION OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CLAIMS.

The most illustrious Protestant Statesmen, those who guided the helm of the kingdom, whose fame remains emblazoned in the annals of the realm, and who established the glory of this Protestant empire, have uniformly opposed the concession of political power to the Roman Catholics. They have, generally, been influenced by the noblest motives, a devotion to the interests of their country ; a sincere attachment to rational, civil, and religious liberty, besides an ardent admiration of our unrivalled Constitution. Regardless of the taunts and devices of ignoble opponents, having engendered a hallowed union between our Protestant Church and State, they erected barriers for its felicitous continuance ; barriers, some of which remain as invaluable memorials of their wisdom, justice,

magnanimity and precaution. Never were any individuals so tenacious of their inalienable rights and privileges as our Protestant forefathers ; never was any nation so eminent for its various political virtues as this Protestant kingdom.

However needless it must appear to expatiate on their universally acknowledged zeal in the cause of civil and religious freedom, it is equally futile to detail, the numerous means adopted by them, for the achievement of their constitutional projects. Whatever penal statutes were enacted by our ancestors, are sufficiently justifiable by the urgent causes of necessity that occurred at those awful periods. The illustrious statesmen who proposed them are shielded by their well-earned reputations from obloquy ; and their patriotic principles should be duly estimated by constitutional Protestants at this imminent crisis. But, further dilatation respecting their measures, or their merits, is evidently unnecessary ; their sentiments—the sentiments of zealous, noble-minded, and immortal Protestant statesmen—shall be submitted to the nation. Let those declarations be attentively perused, and sedulously considered, as they emanate from the most devoted and strenuous champions of civil and religious liberty.

The Revolution of 1688, shall be the epoch of our recital. James II. opposed in his arbitrary schemes and Popish designs, abdicated the throne of England. Immediately afterwards, on December 11th, 1688, the Protestant Lords, Spiritual and

Temporal, with the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of London, having assembled at Guildhall, drew up the following memorable declaration, worthy of the illustrious individuals, and deserving the approval of every Protestant, particularly those who value and commemorate the glorious Revolution of 1688.

“We doubt not but that the world believes,” say THE PROTESTANT PEERS OF ENGLAND, “that in this great and dangerous conjuncture, we are heartily and zealously *concerned for the Protestant religion*, the laws of the land, and the liberties and properties of the subject. And we did reasonably hope, that the King having issued out his proclamation and writs for a free Parliament, we might have rested secure under the expectation of that meeting. But his Majesty having withdrawn himself, and, as we apprehend, in order to his departure out of this kingdom, by the pernicious counsels of persons ill-affected to our nation and religion, we cannot, without being wanting to our duty, be silent under those calamities, wherein the *Popish counsels*, which so long prevailed, have miserably involved these realms. We do therefore unanimously resolve to apply ourselves to his Highness the Prince of Orange, who with so great kindness to these kingdoms, such vast expense, and so much hazard to his own person, has undertaken, by endeavouring to procure a free Parliament, to rescue us, with as little effusion as possible of Christian blood, from the *imminent dangers of slavery and Popery*.

“And we do hereby declare, that we will, with our utmost endeavours, assist his Highness in the obtaining such a Parliament with all speed, wherein our laws, our liberties, and properties may be secured, and *the Church of England in particular*, with a due liberty to *Protestant Dissenters*, and in general, that *the Protestant religion and interest over the*

whole world may be supported and encouraged, to the glory of God, the happiness of the established government in these kingdoms, and the advantage of all princes and states in christendom, that may be herein concerned.

“ In the mean time we will endeavour to preserve, as much as in us lies, the peace and security of those great and populous cities of London and Westminster, and the parts adjacent, by taking care to disarm all *Papists*, and secure all *Jesuits and Romish Priests*, who are in or about the same. And if there be any thing more to be performed by us, for promoting his Highness’s generous intentions for the public good, we shall be ready to do it, as occasion shall require.”

This declaration of true Protestant Principles, being subscribed by the Protestant Peers of England, it was presented to the Prince of Orange, by the Lords Pembroke, Weymouth, Colepepper, and the Bishop of Ely. The Protestant Peers again assembled at Westminster, on December 25th, 1688, when they again addressed the Prince of Orange and “ desired him to cause letters subscribed by himself to be written to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, *being Protestants*, and to all counties and corporations having the return of members, to choose such persons to represent them, as were of right to be sent to Parliament, and to meet at Westminster, on the 22d of January ensuing;” which address was duly presented. His Highness the Prince of Orange having summoned the Parliament, addressed the following letter, “ to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal assembled at Westminster, in this present Convention, January 22d, 1689.

“ My Lords and Gentlemen,

“ I have endeavoured, to the utmost of my power, to perform what was desired from me, in order to the public peace and safety; and I do not know that any thing hath been omitted which might tend to the preservation of them, since the administration of affairs was put into my hands. It now lieth

upon you to lay *the foundation of a firm security for your religion, your laws, and your liberties.*

“ I do not doubt, but that by such a full and free representation of the nation, as is now met, the ends of my declaration will be attained. And since it hath pleased God hitherto to bless my good intentions with so great success, I trust in him, that he will complete his own work, by sending *a spirit of peace and union* to influence your councils, that no interruption may be given to a *happy and lasting settlement.*

“ The dangerous condition of the Protestant Interest in Ireland, requiring a large and speedy succour, and the present state of things abroad, oblige me to tell you, that next to the danger of unseasonable divisions among yourselves, nothing can be so fatal as too great delay in your consultations. The States by whom I have been enabled to rescue this nation, may suddenly feel the ill effects of it, both by being too long deprived of the service of their troops which are now here, and of your early assistance against a powerful enemy, who hath declared war against them. And as England is by treaty already engaged to help them upon any such exigencies, so I am confident that their cheerful concurrence to preserve this kingdom with so much hazard to themselves, will meet all the returns of friendship, and assistance, which may be expected from you, as *Protestants and Englishmen*, whenever their condition shall require it.”

“ WILLIAM HENRY, PRINCE OF ORANGE,

“ Given at St. James’s, this 22d day of January, 1689.

The above letter having been read in the House of Lords, and their lordships having appointed assistants to advise them in matters of law, made an order for a thanksgiving to God, “ For having made the Prince of Orange the glorious instrument of their great deliverance.” The same letter was also read in the House of Commons. Both houses unanimously joined in an address to the Prince, “ wherein they

thankfully acknowledged him the glorious instrument of their *deliverance from Popery and arbitrary power*, requesting him to continue the administration of public affairs, the disposal of the revenue, and the care of Ireland."

Such were the Protestant Principles which influenced the Protestant Peers of England, and the glorious William, at the memorable epoch of the Revolution. These are the Constitutional declarations of the enlightened statesmen who laid the foundation of a firm security of our religion, our laws, and our liberties. That their maxims have been diligently pursued by succeeding generations, is evident from the declarations and solemn pledges given by every king of the illustrious House of Hanover to Parliament on their accession to the Throne, with the Constitutional answer of their Protestant Commons.

GEORGE I. declared:—"This being the first opportunity that I have had of meeting my people in Parliament, since it pleased Almighty God, of his good prudence to call me to the throne of my ancestors, I most gladly make use of it to thank my faithful and loving subjects for that zeal and firmness, that hath been shown in defence of the Protestant succession." "The Established Constitution in Church and State, shall be the rule of my government."

GEORGE II. stated:—"It shall be my constant care to preserve the Constitution of this kingdom, as it is now happily established in Church and State, inviolable in all its parts."

GEORGE III. declared:—"Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton, and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people whose loyalty and warm affection to me,

I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne; and, I doubt not, but their steadiness in these principles will equal the firmness of my invariable resolution to adhere to, and strengthen, this excellent Constitution in Church and State.”

The PROTESTANT COMMONS of England, in their answer to George I. declared:—“It is with inexpressible joy, that we approach your Majesty, peaceably seated on the throne of your royal ancestors; and being thoroughly sensible of the many open and secret practices, that have of late years, been used to defeat the Protestant succession, we cannot sufficiently adore the Divine Providence that so seasonably interposed and saved this nation, by your Majesty’s happy accession to the crown. Your faithful Commons receive, with the highest gratitude, your most gracious assurances that the established Constitution in Church and State shall be the rule of your government.” “We are sensible of your goodness expressed to those who have distinguished themselves by their zeal and firmness for the Protestant succession.”

The PROTESTANT COMMONS of England, in their answer to George II. stated:—“We thank your Majesty for those ample assurances you have given us, inviolably to preserve the Constitution of these kingdoms, as it is now happily established in Church and State; and to secure to all your subjects the full enjoyment of their religious and civil rights.”

The PROTESTANT COMMONS of England, in their answer to George III. declared:—“We venerate and confide in those sacred assurances of your Majesty’s firm and invariable resolution to adhere to, and strengthen this excellent Constitution in Church and State.”

We shall now proceed from the Protestant Principles, so clearly evinced by our sovereigns and legislative bodies, to the opinions of our most illus-

trious ancestors. They merit an equal consideration with the preceding, as emanating from those who attained the most exalted stations in the kingdom; besides those who, while living, were endeared for their dauntless advocacy of patriotic maxims, and whose writings are perused at present, for the acquisition of high-minded ideas, respecting our laws, our liberties, and our religion.

The EARL OF CLARENDON, formerly Lord High Chancellor of England, says:—"It is therefore very unreasonable (for the Popes) to put a yoke upon the necks of the Catholics who live under Protestant princes, by obliging them to contend with the laws of their country under which they are born, in things merely temporal; and to distinguish themselves from their fellow-subjects, by *acknowledging but half that obedience to their prince which others pay*, and thereby force their sovereigns, who should be common fathers, to give but a half-protection to them who pay but a half-obedience." "It is needful to make the strictest laws to disable those from doing hurt, by their depraved affections, to their king and country, who will not secure their king and country of their good affections to them, by taking those lawful oaths which are the common bonds of all subjects within the same dominions; and which have as well to do with the illimited fancies of the brain as the dutiful affections of the heart; and though men cannot reasonably be tied to think what others think, they may be ready to *do* what others *do*. For, no prince nor state can be secured of the dutiful actions of those who subject themselves to *opinions* which control those actions, and dispose the persons not to perform them; as when the Pope excommunicates all those whom he calls heretics, and absolves all those who are in subjection to those excommunicated persons from any oaths they have taken to them, and from all duty that they are un-

derstood to owe them. And when princes see that, accordingly, their subjects depart from their duty and obedience, have they not great reason to make themselves as sure as may be, that those subjects to whom they allow the protection of their laws shall not submit to such authority, nor should consent to such doctrines? And, if they shall refuse to make any such declarations, have they not great reason to provide for their own security by other restrictions?"

Lord Clarendon then asks his countrymen who refuse to give sufficient security for their obedience to the Sovereign, "Whether, by adding something to their religion which is not religion, they do not deservedly bring those penalties and forfeitures upon themselves, which they sustain in the very exercise of their religion; and whether the Crown can be without a reasonable and just jealousy of their affections, until *they renounce all kind of subjection to, and all kind of dependence upon the Bishop of Rome*, who doth desire all opportunities by which the peace of the kingdom may be disturbed.

"It is no more to excuse them than it is security for the king, to say that they do not acknowledge any *temporal* authority to be in the Pope, so that he cannot disturb the peace of the kingdom; and that, if himself came to invade the kingdom, they would oppose and resist him with the same courage as they would fight against the Turk! *Spiritual* authority had done too much mischief to be undervalued, or believed to have less mind to do mischief than it had; nor do they who talk of resisting, know to what degree, they would resist, or to what degree they would not assist it, if there were occasion.

"No man yet knows what themselves mean by that *spiritual authority* which they own to be in the Pope; and which they would before this time have carefully explained, if they thought it so innocent that no harm could be apprehended from it: and till they do clearly define what it is, they must not take it ill, if we conceive that they mean enough

by it to compass anything the Pope thinks seasonable to apply it to. So that the attributing any power to him, or acknowledging any to be in him, of how *spiritual* a nature soever it is thought to be, shall be enough to give law to the *temporal*, when a spiritual end shall so direct it: and all kings have reason to believe, that every Pope thinks he hath the same authority over them which any of his predecessors have ever exercised over any of their predecessors; and as much as Bellarmine, Mariana, or any other Jesuit, hath assigned them.

“ Since the Popes have not in the least degree disclaimed or renounced the highest act of power which any of their predecessors have ever exercised (though they may have not found it *seasonable* or safe for them to *attempt* the same usurpation), nor hath the Catholic CHURCH condemned or disapproved those opinions published by Jesuits and other writers, which have been published by authority, we may reasonably, and without breach of charity, believe, that it is only want of opportunity, and despair of success, which restrains them from those outward excesses, and not any reformation in their judgments, or an opinion that their jurisdiction is not in truth as large and illimited as any of their predecessors ever presumed to infest the Christian world with.”*

LORD HALE declared, “ that the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown is a most unquestionable right of it,—that the Pope had made great usurpations upon it,—that the statutes rejoined and restored it to the Crown,—that the Papal encroachments, yea, even in matters civil, under the loose pretence, *in ordine et spiritualia*, had obtained a great strength, notwithstanding the security the Crown had by the oaths of fealty and allegiance. So that there was a necessity to unrivet these usurpations by substituting, by

* Lord Clarendon’s historical work entitled “ Religion and Polity.”

authority of Parliament, a recognition by oath of the King's supremacy, as well in causes ecclesiastical as civil."

The EARL OF CHATHAM'S observations on the Quebec Government Act is thus reported,—“ He also took notice of an amendment which had been made in the House of Commons, which was a new clause, repealing so much of the Act of Reformation of the 1st of Elizabeth as relates to the oath of Supremacy, and substituting a common oath of allegiance in its place. *This act of Elizabeth* (he said) *had always been looked upon as one that the legislature had no more right to repeal than the Great Charter or the Bill of Rights.* He exposed the train of fatal mischiefs attending the establishment of *Popery and arbitrary power* in that vast and fertile region now annexed to the government of Quebec, and capable of containing (if fully peopled) not less than thirty millions. He deduced the whole series of laws from the supremacy first revindicated under Henry VIII. down to this day, as *fundamentals constituting a clear compact that all establishments by law are to be Protestant*, which compact ought not to be altered, but by the consent of the collective body of the people. He further maintained, that the dangerous innovations of this bill, were at variance with all the safe-guards and barriers against the return of Popery and of Popish influence so wisely provided against by all the oaths of office and of trust, from the constable up to the members of both Houses, and even to the *Sovereign in his Coronation Oath.* He pathetically expressed his fears that it might shake the affections and confidence of his Majesty's Protestant subjects in England and Ireland. His lordship then said, that for these and other reasons, he gave his hearty negative to the bill.”*

LORD ELLENBOROUGH declared, that “ *Catholic emancipa-*

* Earl of Chatham's Speech in the House of Lords, June 17th, 1774, as reported in Cobbett's Parliamentary History, p. 1403-4 of that year.

tion (as it is improperly called, if that term is meant to designate any slavish subjection as still subsisting on their part, either in respect of person, property, or the profession of religious faith, or the exercise of religious worship) *has been fully attained*. The only remaining emancipation which they are capable of receiving, must be acquired by an act of their own; by redeeming themselves from the foreign bondage under which they and their ancestors have long unworthily groaned, and from which the State, as it has neither imposed nor continued it, has no adequate means of relieving them, consistently with the duty of self-preservation which it owes to itself. Every state, claiming and exercising independent powers of sovereignty, has incidentally belonging to it, as such, the power of binding its subjects by laws of its own; not only paramount to, but exclusive of, any authority or control to be exercised by any other state whatsoever. In so far as any foreign state or person is allowed to exercise an authority, breaking in upon this exclusive and independent power of legislation, and enforcement of authority in another state, to that extent such state, so entrenched upon, is not *sovereign and independent*, but admits itself to be *subordinate to, and dependent upon* the other. The declaration contained in the oath of Supremacy, which expresses a denial and renunciation of the existence of any power and authority, in respect of ecclesiastical and spiritual matters, in any foreign state, potentate, or person whatsoever, is but the affirmance of a proposition, which is logically and politically true, as an essential principle of independent sovereignty, applicable not to this government only, but to every other government under the sun, which claims to possess and exercise the powers of independent sovereignty."

Lord Ellenborough also observed, that "the Pope, in virtue of his general spiritual authority, claims authority in matters of *morals* (*i. e.* of moral conduct, and which extends to all the acts of man), as well as in matters of *mere faith*: he

claims and habitually exercises, on some subjects, a power of dispensing with OATHS, and in that respect of nullifying all human sanctions whatsoever, as far as they affect the conscience through the medium of oaths. He claims and exercises by himself, and delegates to others, an effectual, or supposed effectual power of absolution. What fatal effects that power, as exercised by the Roman Catholic Priesthood, and applied to a credulous multitude, is capable of producing upon the civil and political condition of that community in which it is allowed to prevail, let the recent experience of Ireland during the late rebellion (1798) attest; where wretches, reeking with the blood of their murdered countrymen, have been purified from the guilt of past atrocities, and prepared for the commission of new, by the all-atoning virtues of *Popish absolution!* Such a power as this over the conscience engrosses and directs more than half the faculties and energy of the entire man. The power of *excommunication* is, in the hands of their clergy, a most powerful and dangerous engine, not of *spiritual* and *ecclesiastical* only, but of *temporal* power. It acts at once upon all the comforts of domestic and social life in this world, and upon all the hopes and expectations of happiness in that which is to come. With what harshness and rigour, and with what daring defiance of the established law of the land, this most operative power of interdiction has been recently applied, not only to a few individuals only, but to large multitudes of people, a noble and learned lord detailed to us on a former evening.

“ These are a few, and but a few, of the practical civil inconveniences which might be instanced, as derived to the State and its subjects from the authority of the See of Rome, spiritual and ecclesiastical, as it is exercised over the sons of the Church; producing as it does, a *distracted allegiance* in the same person, acknowledging and living under the temporal power of one sovereign, and bound in faith and morals

by the authority of another, claiming to be his spiritual guide and governor, his ecclesiastical sovereign, and in effect, in all matters of supreme conscientious concernment, God's vicegerent and representative on earth."*

LORD BOLTON, Chief Secretary for Ireland, declared,—“Incapacities are not unknown to Protestants, and cannot be wholly withdrawn from Roman Catholics without surrender of even equality. If we, for a moment, appreciate the real case as it is, and as it is pretended it ought to be, we shall find that no penalties or restrictions remain which can be felt by the great mass of the Roman Catholic people, and that not the grant of all which is required would add a grain to their wants or wishes; and in respect of the few who might be objects of supposed benefit by the further indulgences, they are excluded only from certain situations by necessary regard for our constitutional establishment, and from which in fact, *they exclude themselves* by refusal to aspire to them upon equal conditions with their Protestant fellow-subjects.” He concluded thus,—“I will not shut out the wish or the hope for alteration of circumstances; but with our limited power of searching into future chance and change, we can, I think, retain this possible expectation, as the only prevention to a positive declaration, that here, even here, must be ALL AND THE END OF ALL. We are obliged in conscience, honour, and duty to ourselves, and to our Constitution in Church and State, to throw our shield of self-preservation before us, and on it to exhibit the warning voice of ‘*ne plus ultra.*’”†

MR. PERCIVAL declared,—“I shall content myself with proving that the motion (respecting the Roman Catholic claims) is *repugnant to a solemn stipulation between Ireland and Great Britain*, and in doing that, I shall furnish, I trust,

* Lord Ellenborough's speech in the House of Lords, May 13th, 1805.

† Lord Bolton's speech in the House of Lords, May 13th, 1805.

sufficient matter for its rejection. The stipulation to which I allude, is that contained in the fifth article of the Act of Union, which expressly mentions, that the Protestant Church is to be the Established Church of the State. We should consider what would be the alienating operation of the repeal of the fifth article of Union, upon the Protestant population of Ireland. I fear the effect of it would be to destroy that tranquillity which gentlemen seem so anxious to maintain. Even that morality and conscientious regard for their oaths, which is said to be so strongly inculcated by the tenets of the Roman Catholic religion, should convince honourable members, that in a regular, orderly way, they would admit no opportunities of procuring for their religion all possible advantages. Have they not their bishoprics, their deaneries, and all the gradations which are to be found in the Established Church? And knowing this, who can say that they have relinquished all hopes of enjoying the emoluments appertaining to those dignities? One of their tenets is, and of which any member who goes into a bookseller's shop may convince himself, that they are bound *to pay tithes only to their lawful pastors.*

“The immunities,” concluded this right honourable and truly zealous Protestant, “which have been already granted to the Roman Catholics, I think, are sufficient; and there is one of them, I mean the elective franchise, which, had I been a member of the legislature, I should have felt an inclination to oppose, and also the Roman Catholic college (Maynooth). What privilege is there which the Roman Catholics do not enjoy, with the exception of sitting in Parliament, and the capacity of being appointed to a few great offices, in as full and complete a manner as those who profess the Established religion? They have nothing to desire on the score of toleration, that they and every other Dissenter from the Established Church do not enjoy as fully as they can wish. Anxious as I am to conciliate so important a

member of the empire, I cannot bring myself to approve of this measure. If the demands of the petitioners were conceded to their numbers, and their majority, no possibility would remain of refusing to comply with any future demands they may think proper to make. What their numbers and majority shall have once obtained, will only tend to stimulate them to fresh demands, until nothing remains for them to require, and they become not merely a prevailing party in the State, but *exclusively the State itself*.*

Besides those constitutional authorities, the immortal LORD SOMERS declared that,—“If the common people of England once lose the *cry against Popery*, it will be the easiest matter in the world to take away their liberty.” LORD CHESTERFIELD stated that, “the speculative errors of Papists would only deserve pity, if their *pernicious influence upon society* did not require and authorize restraint.” LORD CLARE held, “canonical obedience to the Pope to be inconsistent with the duties of civil allegiance to a Protestant state.” And LORD HARDWICKE stated, “It well deserves the serious attention of the whole nation, of what important consequence it is, to preserve not only the name and outward form of Protestantism among us, but the real uniform belief and practice of it. Indifference to all religion prepares man for external profession of any, and what may that not lead to?” “Give me leave,” added he, speaking in the presence of the Lords and Commons, “to affirm before this great assembly, that, even abstracted from religious considerations, the Protestant religion ought to be held in the highest reverence, as the surest barrier of our civil Constitution. Ecclesiastical usurpation seldom fails to end in civil tyranny. The present happy settlement of the Crown is, in truth, and not in name only, the Protestant succession—and the inviolable preser-

* Speech of the Right Hon. Spencer Percival, in the House of Commons, May 15th, 1805.

vation of that wise and fundamental law made since the Revolution, whereby every Papist is absolutely excluded from inheriting the Crown, will be a solid security to our posterity against all who shall watch for the destruction of our liberties.”

BLACKSTONE observed, “as to Papists, what has been said of the Protestant Dissenters, would hold equally strong for a general *toleration* of them; provided their separation was founded only upon difference of opinion in religion; and their principles did not also tend to a subversion of the civil government. If once they could be brought to renounce the *supremacy of the Pope*, they might quietly enjoy their seven sacraments, their purgatory and auricular confessions, their worship of relics and images, nay, even their transubstantiation. But while they acknowledge a *foreign power superior* to the sovereign of the kingdom, they cannot complain if the laws of that kingdom will not treat them upon the footing of good subjects.”*

LOCKE held, “These have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate that will not own and *teach the duty of tolerating* all men in matters of religion. For what do all these and the late doctrines signify, but that they may and are ready upon any occasion to seize the government, and possess themselves of the estates and fortunes of their fellow-subjects; and that they only ask leave to be tolerated by the magistrate so long, until they find themselves strong enough to effect it. Again: that church can have no right to be tolerated by the magistrate, which is so constituted upon such a bottom, that all those who enter, do thereby *ipso facto* deliver themselves up to the protection of another prince. For by this means the magistrate would give way to the *settling of a foreign jurisdiction in his own country*, and suffer his own people, to be listed, as it were, for soldiers against his own

* Comment. lib. iv. c. 438.

government. Nor does the frivolous and fallacious distinction between the Court and the Church afford any remedy to this inconvenience; especially when both the one and the other are equally subject to the absolute authority of the same person; who has not only power to persuade the members of the Church to whatsoever he lists, either as purely religious, or as in order thereunto, but can also enjoin it them on pain of eternal fire.”*

SELDEN observed,—“The Papists must acknowledge the Pope; they must have some supreme prince, and some homage to do to him, even in this world; and for this reason it is that they cannot enjoy the same privileges which are vested in the other subjects of this realm.”

And HOADLEY declared,—“The wonder is not that the professed members of the Church of Rome unite their hearts and hands, and leave no method, whether of deceit or violence, unattempted, for the service of that cause, which, in all their lowest fortune, they never suffer to be removed out of their sight; that they put on all the forms of complaisance and dissimulation, of civility and good humour, even to heretics themselves, to inveigle them into their own ruin; that they flatter, and promise, and swear every thing that is good and kind to their fellow-labourers; and at the same time enter into all the resolutions of destruction and desolation, *whenever the opportunity of power shall come*. This is nothing but what is worthy of themselves, and of that church, to the slavery of which they have devoted themselves. It is no more than what they fairly and publicly profess, *if Protestants will but open their eyes and see it*. It is their religion and their conscience; it is inculcated upon them, as the great condition of their acceptance with God; that no good-nature of their own, no obligations from others, no ties of oaths and solemn assurances, no regard to truth,

* Works of Locke, vol. iv. p. 46—ed. 1812.

justice, or honour, are to restrain them from any thing, let it be of what sort soever, that is for the security or temporal advancement of their Church.”*

Such are the memorable declarations of our illustrious Protestant ancestors. They are fearless, honourable, candid, and just. They emanate from those untinged by sordid affections,—uninfluenced by ignoble or disingenuous motives. Pusillanimity of character never swayed their magnanimous minds. Who durst question their sincere attachment to our glorious Constitution, or their devoted adherence to the maxims of civil and religious liberty?

When such opinions have been publicly avowed by individuals of no minor importance—but, of superior station, and transcendent abilities, do they not deserve the earnest attention of every zealous and undoubted Protestant? Some of those illustrious statesmen laid the foundation of our Protestant Constitution—while others raised that superstructure which has long excited the envy of surrounding nations, and the admiration of the world. Their talents were devoted to the interests of their fellow-countrymen—their lives present an unchequered symbol of zeal and animation in the maintenance of rational freedom, and of social order. “*Homines ad Deos nullâ re propiùs accedunt, quàm salutem hominibus dando.*”

* Hoadley's Sermons, XI. p. 22.

But, the opinions here detailed are merely transcribed from those who opposed the concession of every species of political power to the Roman Catholics. Numerous others may be adduced from even their quondam advocates, which are decidedly hostile to “total, unqualified, and unconditional concessions.” These are unnecessary to be quoted. For, will not Protestants of the present age, adopting the maxims, and pursuing a course coincident with their illustrious ancestors, rally beneath the banners of Church and State? Will they not defend from the assaults of designing Jesuitical friends, and publicly avowed enemies, that Constitution established on the basis of enlightened toleration, and of rational liberty? Public opinion has recently exhibited the dauntless manifestation of a spirit among the wisest, the noblest, and the most esteemed to uphold our rights and privileges, or to perish in the wreck of our laws, and liberties, and religion.

VIII.—THAT A PREPONDERATING MAJORITY OF BRITISH AND IRISH PEERS, WITH A MAJORITY OF BRITISH REPRESENTATIVES, BEING OPPOSED TO THIS MISNAMED “EMANCIPATION”—IT IS A MEASURE WHICH, BEING REPUGNANT TO THE FUNDAMENTAL AXIOMS OF THE BRITISH CONSTITUTION, AND DISCORDANT WITH THE INCLINATIONS OF THE PEOPLE, IS THEREFORE UNSUITABLE, INEXPEDIENT, AND UNNECESSARY FOR THIS PROTESTANT NATION.

If recent occurrences in this kingdom—the petitions

presented to the legislature against Roman Catholic pretensions—the majority of British representatives, who rejected those claims in one of the most numerous assemblies ever remembered within the House of Commons—the patriotic spirit which animates the constitutional Nobility of the realm—besides the enthusiasm which pervades the people against the re-establishment of Popery—if these circumstances be contemplated, must it not be manifest to the most sceptical, that a preponderating majority of all ranks and classes, is determined to maintain the laws, the liberties, and religion of this empire. The delusion which possessed some individuals is fortunately dispelled—the charm is broken, and those who remember the causes and baneful consequences of the late spiritual domination in Ireland, have dauntlessly resolved to oppose any further encroachments under the Jesuitical and specious designation of Roman Catholic “emancipation.”

Never was there a period, since the reign of James II., so critical as the present—when Protestant principles must be manfully advocated, and sedulously disseminated in every district. Whether the establishments founded by the wisdom of our ancestors, and under which the greatest blessings have accrued to these realms, be upheld, or the Papal institutions, which it was the peculiar object of the Reformation and Revolution to exclude, be re-admitted, is the question that interests every individual, and must soon be determined. It cannot be any longer deferred. Our opponents are

daily undermining the barriers of Protestantism, while their advocates have succeeded the most zealous supporters of the Constitution, in the hitherto Protestant government of Britain. Those advocates of Roman Catholic pretensions, at present, guide the public affairs of State, and the decision of Parliament on this most important topic may be shortly influenced, under the Premiership of an individual—

“ — Nil fuit unquam
Tam dispar sibi.”

The recent change of Administration, having excited an intense interest in the public mind, it cannot be deemed inopportune to make a few observations respecting the noble-minded and illustrious personages who sacrificed office, emolument, and power. What prompted this vivifying act of patriotism? Was it any ignoble, or pusillanimous, or sordid motive? Was it conducive to their immediate prospects, or beneficial to their pecuniary concerns? They were influenced by no selfish interests,—the *auri sacra fames* never biassed their magnanimous decision. They were actuated solely by public principle,—by political consistency,—by an ardent desire to accord inviolably with the injunctions of that sacred oath, by which they solemnly swore to resist the establishment of a foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction within the kingdom,—besides their resolve to discountenance a theoretic system totally irreconcilable with the ancient policy of these realms!

The distinguished Protestant patriots, because, forsooth, they resigned about the same period, were

shamelessly accused of cabal and intrigue. A more calumnious imputation never emanated from the designing maligners! If the noble individuals actually associated for the purpose of preserving the Constitution unimpaired, would not the indescribable importance of the measure, be a sufficient justification of the event? But, the high-minded individuals, instead of congregating, determined separately,—each on his own responsibility. They have proclaimed it in the Senate—their declarations have been diffused in every district—they are universally acquitted of dishonourable, or ungracious, or factious deportment. The coincidence of their resignations may be satisfactorily explained by the fact—*that Mr. Canning's letter to each was simultaneous.* And, this gentleman, instead of stating so material a circumstance—instead of declaring the real situation of the case, cunningly attempted (but fortunately failed) to debase those noble, and illustrious, and disinterested Protestant patriots. *Nusquam tuta fides!*

. Without further observations on these circumstances—without remarking on such disreputable conduct—and without detailing numerous incidents connected therewith, the following justification is subjoined from two of the right honourable and illustrious patriots. Besides vindicating themselves and their colleagues from the unfounded aspersions attempted to be affixed upon their character, they also proclaim similar Protestant sentiments, and exhibit an equally uncompromising determination to uphold

our glorious Constitution *now, when out of office*, as when they guided our national councils. This political consistency should endear those personages to every admirer of candour, and every friend of truth—this constitutional deportment should render their sentiments hallowed by every rational dispassionate individual.

The EARL OF ELDON declared,—“ After having been, in common with all the other noble lords who thought proper to resign office, so unmercifully attacked, I conceive it to be my duty, and I hope I may be permitted—I who have been so long connected with this House, and so long an advocate of principles directly contrary to those unpardonable and unconstitutional principles with which I have been charged; I say, I trust, my lords, that I may be allowed—to take this, the earliest moment allowed me since I first heard those charges, of rising in my place and uttering my solemn declaration, that they are most base and infamous calumnies, as far as they have been applied to myself, and, I firmly believe, as far as any body has dared to apply them to the noble persons who resigned office at the same time. That I, my lords, should be supposed guilty,—I, who have uniformly supported such principles as I have, at all times, and through good report and evil report—that I should be accused of attempting to dictate to my Sovereign in the formation of a government for the country, is a thing that I never can bear stated without telling the individual who may dare to utter it, that it is a base and scandalous falsehood. (Loud cheering.) On the other hand, however, after having long and faithfully served my gracious Sovereign, and after having served his father, I have a right to state in this place, and to state to him, that I never will disguise my sentiments upon any subject that may be submitted to my consideration. My

opinion has always been, and is still, that if the Roman Catholic claims were granted, there would be an end to the religious liberties of the country—and when the religious liberties of a country are once gone, the civil liberties soon follow. And this opinion I will support till my dying day, and in whatever station I may be placed.

“ With respect to the accusation of conspiracy which has been brought against me, I solemnly declare, before my God, that it is perfectly unfounded. The communications of my noble friends were sent without concert upon my part. Of some of them, in fact, I knew nothing, until I read them in the newspapers. I feel strongly, my lords, that there is no censure too harsh for the man who would presume to dictate to his Majesty in the exercise of his most just and constitutional right of choosing his own minister; but I also feel, that no censure can be too harsh for him who, when his Sovereign does condescend to honour him by asking his advice, hesitates to give that advice honestly, openly, and at once; and, in acting thus, a man could not, by possibility, violate any constitutional principle. I have been long, my lords,—perhaps too long—a public servant; but I trust that, if you give me any credit for sincerity, you will believe me when I say, that nothing ever shall prevent me from using my utmost efforts to support the Constitution in the same state in which it was *delivered to us by our ancestors at the Revolution*. By such conduct alone, my lords, can we hope to preserve our religious and our civil liberties, which must always co-exist,—by retaining the Constitution in that form which was *approved of by your ancestors*, my lords, in the *Act of Settlement*. My whole life has been devoted, and it shall to my dying hour be devoted, to oppose the introduction of alterations which must produce ecclesiastical tyranny, which would soon, in its turn, produce civil tyranny. I contend, my lords, that unless the Constitution be preserved uninjured, and in its present state, we can have nothing but ecclesiastical

tyranny to expect. The events of the last four years prove this to demonstration; they must prove it to the perfect satisfaction of all who will only afford them proper consideration. Perhaps, my lords, the sentiments which influence me may be erroneous: they have, however, always been honestly, sincerely, and zealously maintained; and your lordships will acknowledge that my own ideas must be the directors of my own conduct.”*

And MR. PEEL observed:—“From the first moment of my public life, I have taken an active and decided part, on a great and public question—that of the extension of political privileges to the Roman Catholics. For a space of eighteen years I have pursued one undeviating course of conduct, during the whole of that time offering an uncompromising, but a temperate and fair, and, as I believe, a constitutional resistance to the making of any further concessions to the Roman Catholics. During fourteen out of those eighteen years, I have held office; and during eleven of those years I have been closely connected with that country most interested in the decision of those claims. The opinions which I held during that time I still retain; and I thought, from having always avowed those opinions, but, above all, from having, while in office, taken an active, and I may, perhaps, say, important part against the claims of the Roman Catholics, that I could not remain in office after events had rendered it probable that I should be the single minister of the Crown who was likely to continue opposed to them. I say, Sir, under these circumstances, I did not feel that it would be consistent with the career I had hitherto pursued, and with the maintenance of my own character as a public man, to acquiesce in arrangements which would benefit myself by enabling me to retain office, which, however, I could not do without acting in a manner calculated materially to promote the successful ter-

* See Debates in the House of Lords, May 2d, 1827.

mination of a question to which, under other circumstances, and in other aspects of political affairs, I had offered the most decided resistance. Under these circumstances, and with respect to the nature of the opposition which I had always offered to the proposed concessions to the Roman Catholics, I felt myself bound to act as I have done.

“ Sir, the nature of that opposition was such as to allow of no middle course; it was founded upon the belief which I have always sincerely entertained, that the removal of those barriers, which the law opposed to the attainment of political power by the Roman Catholics, was *inconsistent with the maintenance of the Constitution, and with the welfare and safety of the Church*. These being the grounds on which I have always spoken and acted, I say, Sir, that I am now in the judgment of the House and of the country, whether I had not sufficient reason to decline acquiescing in arrangements which were calculated most decidedly to promote that object to which I had always been opposed.

“ The circumstances to which I have referred, I considered seriously; and having done so, I made up my mind to retire from office, if my Right Honourable Friend, whose opinions on this subject were so decidedly opposed to my own, should be placed at the head of the Administration, where he could with more effect than ever support these opinions. If my own had been doubtful, my duty might not have required my resignation; but they were not, and my rigid sense of public duty has determined my course.

“ If even the Administration could have remained in the same state as before—if it could have continued exactly neutral upon this question, I might have continued in office; but when I saw that exact neutrality could not be expected—when I found that the Duke of York was no more, and that the voice of the Earl of Liverpool had become silent, I thought I had a right to act, and, indeed, that I ought to act upon the conviction of my own mind, and not subject myself

to suspicions by seeming to have been converted to opposite opinions, especially when the period of that apparent conversion would have concurred precisely with that of the change of administration. I therefore determined to sacrifice office, rather than abandon that course which I had previously pursued for so long a time, and which I had continued while in possession of the office which I lately held.

“ The course I pursued was this: I felt my own situation to be one of difficulty, and I wished to influence the opinion and conduct of no man. The first person to whom I communicated my opinion, that I should not be able to concur in the new arrangement, was my Right Honourable Friend, then Secretary for Foreign Affairs. I mentioned my intention to retire to him, and to no other, and I knew not the intention of any other man—I acted on the sense of my own situation. The moment the subject was mentioned to me, I thought that it did not become me to act with any reserve, having made up my mind not to require that my answer should be postponed, until the question had been formally and officially put. This, I am sure, my Right Honourable Friend will do me the justice to admit. The 29th of March was the first occasion on which the subject was introduced, and I then said to my Right Honourable Friend, “ I will tell you without reserve what are my feelings as to my particular situation; they dictate to me retirement from office, if his Majesty should select you to form an Administration.” I am sure he will recollect that I made this statement, without any breach of that good understanding which has long subsisted between us. That information I took care to convey to the highest quarter; for here again I thought that there should be no reserve. My resolution was not sudden,—I acted upon long previous conviction. The step I took was in no respect precipitate, and no one ought to have been taken by surprize by it.

“ As I acted without the concert, it is unnecessary for me

to add, that I did not resort to the advice of others. But though I acted without concert with others, let me repel the painful accusation preferred against me, that I look upon my late Coadjutors now in a different light to that in which I formerly contemplated them. The esteem, respect, and admiration, I felt for them, as my Colleagues in office, I still retain to its fullest extent, and I am far from wishing that my case should be separated from theirs. It is equally true, to state that I am at this moment prepared, if necessary, to vindicate them from the charge of concert and cabal. I am prepared to vindicate them collectively, and individually, and to maintain that the course pursued by each of them was not only perfectly justifiable, but that their impressions and views of duty to the public service, and the conduct produced by those impressions and views, ought to be held up as an example to all who may be placed hereafter in similar circumstances. I declare then, that the charge against these Ministers, or any of them, that they acted by concert and cabal, is not only untrue, but directly the reverse of truth.

“There was no attempt to dictate to his Majesty, by any one of the late Ministers. I can assert it with respect to myself, with respect to the Lord Chancellor, and with respect to that illustrious individual (Duke of Wellington) whose name is stamped for ever on the records of immortality—that man, who is not more remarkable for the brilliancy of his military exploits, than for the simplicity and singleness of his nature—that man, whose candour and openness are habitual; and who is distinguished not only for the respect he bears to the King by office, but, above all, for the reverence he feels for the person of the Sovereign. When I see it charged, after the services he has rendered, that for the base purpose of any office he has acted in a way so derogatory and unworthy, the accusation seems so shameful in its injustice, and so revolting in its ingratitude,—that it is impossible to speak of it without disgust and abhorrence. I say

that I am prepared, were it necessary, to vindicate him and others from the foul aspersions cast upon them connected with their retirement; but I abstain from the undertaking, chiefly because it is not required at my hands, and because elsewhere they may take an opportunity, if they think fit, of meeting and repelling the imputation.”*

Passing over the recent declarations of the Marquis of Chandos, who “ trusted that the House of Commons and the country would never permit the Constitution to be violated at the *will of any minister* ;” of Mr. Bright, who stated that, “ the deeply-rooted aversion to Popery which existed in this country, arose from a strong conviction that the prevalence of that system is, always had been, and ever would be, *inimical to civil liberty* ;” of General Gascoyne, who observed that, “ he represented a town (Liverpool) of one hundred and sixty thousand inhabitants, and he could bear testimony that the increased chance of carrying the Roman Catholic claims, had already excited the utmost alarm in Liverpool ;” and of Mr. Seymour, who said that, “ if the question should be carried through the House by means of the talents which at present support the government, it would be found *impossible* to ram it down the throats of the people of England.”† Our observations on the propositions shall be concluded by the opinions of the Bishop of

* Mr. Peel’s speech in the House of Commons, May 1st, 1827. The Noble individuals alluded to severally vindicated themselves in the House of Lords, May 2d, 1827.

† See Debate in the House of Commons, May 2d, 1827.

London, his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, and Mr. Wilmot Horton. The sentiments of the Bishop of London are adduced, as they elucidate the prevalence of public opinion in the metropolis of Britain, over which his lordship presides; of his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, as they coincide with the principles of Irish Protestants generally, but in particular, with those of the diocese of Dublin, of which he is the zealous, the estimable, and the eloquent prelate; and of Mr. Wilmot Horton, as demonstrating the sentiments of the quondam supporters of Roman Catholic pretensions, respecting their recent dangerous and unconstitutional measures.

“The point to which I would direct your attention,” said the BISHOP OF LONDON to his clergy, “is the light which has been thrown on the character of the Romish Church; *the utter disapproval of any alteration, or even the possibility of alteration, in her principles, claims, or doctrines.* Whatever difference of opinion, under the connivance, if not the allowance of her rulers, may be tolerated, in some respects and in some countries, all her divines of any authority, agree in asserting, that she alone, with the successor of St. Peter at her head, the representative of Christ upon earth, is the one Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, *out of whose bosom there is no salvation,* that to her all churches are subject, as their mother and mistress; the parent to whom they are indebted for their being; the sovereign from whom they derive their authority, and to whom their allegiance is due: that in virtue of the promises of Christ, and the continual assistance of his Spirit, she is *infallible,* exempt from the possibility of error in matters of faith, and authorized to

enforce her decision on the conscience of all Christians. The unity of faith, of worship, of government, all drawn to a point *under the supremacy of the Pope*, is essential to the constitution of her church, and admits of no impeachment. Her authority she cannot renounce in the slightest particular, besides emanating from Christ, as a trust to be exercised for the good of mankind, it is inherent and inalienable; nor can she subject her doctrines to revision, because infallibility precludes aberration. The system of doctrine which she is thus engaged to maintain, has been long since defined and established by the council of Trent, and the creed of Pius IV., which latter embodies the peculiar doctrines rejected by Protestants, and enjoins, under pain of damnation, their reception by every Christian, together with implicit belief of all that is held by the Romish Church, and the renunciation of all opposite errors." "Other churches may differ from us in points of importance: may reproach us with defects and corruptions, and think it right to abstain from our communion. The Romish Church asserts a title to privileges, which, if they really belong to her, *cut us off from connexion with Christ, and place us as rebels, usurpers, and apostates, out of the pale of the Christian Church*. Other churches, if they fall into error, may be corrected by time and reason. The obnoxious tenets of many Christian sects, have either been dropped from their confessions, or have silently sunk into oblivion. *But the errors of the Church of Rome are imperishable*, they derive from her principles, the character of immutability which belongs to divine truth, and are asserted with equal confidence."*

"It is the misfortune of the present day," said his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin, "that the Roman Catholics have made now their religion their politics, and their politics their religion, and if the consequence of my having a very unfa-

* See Charge of the Bishop of London to his Clergy, September, 1826.

vourable opinion of their system of religion be, that I must be supposed to be adverse to their political claims, I cannot help that, it is their act not mine. As long as I find that the Roman Catholic system still avowed in that church, and in no one part disclaimed by any authority of that church, is such as to be in its obvious consequences at war with the peace and safety of society, so long it is impossible for me to desire to give the members of that communion increased power. I feel, that if power be given to those who acknowledge as a vital principle a spiritual supremacy, power is actually given to the person who possesses that spiritual supremacy; and, therefore, we let into our Constitution a foreign influence of a much more dangerous character than if it were avowedly temporal. I conceive, that admitting the Roman Catholics of these countries, subject to such an influence, to the full privileges of the Constitution, is not merely admitting so many individuals to certain privileges, but that it is actually *making a change of the Protestant Constitution of the empire.* *The Constitution of the realm knows of but one allegiance, ecclesiastical as well as civil;* and the Roman Catholics require in their political demands, before they will accept of what they profess to seek, that we shall in the first instance, acknowledge *a new supremacy*, which from its nature and character must necessarily (as the next world will be felt by every conscientious man to be more important than the present) be paramount over that which the loyal Protestant subjects of this realm consider to be supreme. This appears to me a great alteration; it seems *an unjustifiable demand*; it is not a petition for admission to privileges, but it is a demand that the Constitution shall abate its own power, and alter its own character. And here is the great difficulty with regard to Roman Catholics. There is scarcely any other description of religionists in existence, that may not be admitted into offices in the State, without introducing a new power hitherto unknown to the State. There must,

in the first instance, be brought in a new supremacy, before a Roman Catholic will condescend to accept of any of those offices that he seems to be so desirous to obtain, but which at the same time he holds cheap and contemptible compared with that allegiance which in any State is dangerous, a foreign allegiance; but which *in the Protestant State of Britain is eminently dangerous as being at direct variance with the religion of the empire.*"*

MR. WILMOT HORTON asks, "what have the British Catholic Association done? They have blamed the supineness of the British Roman Catholics as contrasted with those of Ireland. They have unanimously voted their thanks to Mr. O'Connell, thereby identifying themselves with him. They have resolved—"That the thanks of the British Catholics are pre-eminently due to the most reverend, right reverend, and reverend the Catholic Clergy of Ireland, for their indefatigable and patriotic assistance in the cause of freedom, during the late elections in that country." They have resolved—"That they hail with delight the splendid triumphs achieved in Ireland by the forty-shilling freeholders; and that it is with sentiments of the highest admiration, they tender their warmest acknowledgments to those honest and independent men, who preferred to endure every privation rather than lose their self-respect by the violation of their consciences." Now what is this, if it be not calculated, I will not say, to confirm the prejudices, but to verify the predictions of those Protestants, who have always said—"You trust to the Catholics that they will not allow their religion to operate in civil concerns. Depend upon it they are deceiving you when they profess such abstinence. They will apply that religion as an engine to press on their claims, not merely for an equal participation in the privileges which Protestants

* Archbishop of Dublin's evidence before the Lords' Committee, May 3, 1825.

enjoy, but to obtain the unqualified triumph of Roman Catholic ascendancy." And, in what, I would beg to ask, consists the virtue on the part of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, of endeavouring, through the means of religion, to break that link, and to destroy that relation of mutual dependence and protection, which, if it subsist not between the landlord and the tenant, must be fatal to the prosperity of any country where property exists. Take the instance of the Duke of Devonshire. He, and his family, and his party, have been the unflinching promoters of the Roman Catholic Question. Is it an act of virtue on the part of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, to show their gratitude to the Duke of Devonshire, by employing their *religious influence* to drive his tenantry into acts of the grossest ingratitude? If the applause of the British Roman Catholics had been limited to the exercise of such influence on the part of the Roman Catholic Priesthood during that time, and that time only, when their countrymen were debarred from the exercise of the civil rights enjoyed by Protestants—although I should have considered the principle as infinitely too dangerous to admit of real justification for one moment, yet the distinction would have been palpable, and the danger of the present would have been mitigated, though not removed. But to talk of Priests 'possessing Irish hearts that beat responsive to the liberties of their country,'—who is to decide at what precise point those liberties begin and end? Who can be fairly reproached for expressing their fears, that if the Catholic Question be granted, *the Priests will be found redoubling their energy to effect the return of Roman Catholic members instead of Protestants*, and thus perpetuating their attack on the rightful privileges of property? Is it well to teach men that ingratitude and duplicity are in fact 'virtue and patriotic devotedness,' and that the cause of true religion is served by resisting the wishes of a benevolent landlord, who may have protected and fostered them on the most trying

occasions—and above all, *to preach up the perpetual religious crusade, to the real extinction of civil liberty, and to the ruin of their country?*”*

Protestants should remember that these sentiments were expressed by an individual who has hitherto supported the Roman Catholic pretensions. They should be duly estimated by every friend of civil liberty, the rights of property, and our glorious Constitution. If they emanated from an ardent champion of Church and State, some doubt may be suggested by our opponents against their impartial delineation. But, when they were promulged by Mr. Wilmot Horton, the quondam panegyrist of their merits, the pamphleteer to the Duke of Norfolk, and a zealous Parliamentary advocate of their claims—must they not excite universal apprehension, or can their portentous tendency be possibly questioned? These topics, with the preliminary remarks, clearly prove the dangerous nature of the mis-named “emancipation”—that it is repugnant to the fundamental maxims of the British Constitution. Besides, the numerous petitions recently presented to the legislature from every district of the kingdom against those claims—the benign deportment of British representatives, and the dauntless conduct of British Peers, indubitably demonstrate its discordance with the inclinations of his Majesty’s faithful subjects—which consequently renders it inexpedient and unnecessary for this Protestant nation.

* Mr. Wilmot Horton’s letter to Mr. Blount, July 28th, 1826.

FRIENDS AND BRITONS.—From the Roman Catholic statements here adduced,—from the declarations of Constitutional Protestants submitted to your consideration, conjoined with the arguments now advanced—you can satisfactorily determine that important question which preceded those propositions. “Whether the measures adopted by our ancestors, to render the British nation essentially Protestant, ought to be rescinded; and whether the barriers erected, at various periods, for the security of our glorious Constitution in Church and State, ought to be dismantled, merely for ephemeral political expediency, and to mitigate the rancour of a body, which acknowledges the jurisdiction of a foreign ecclesiastical monarch within this kingdom?” No doubt can possibly remain on your minds, as to the duty as well as necessity of preserving the ancient institutions of these realms, and to maintain that policy which has borne this Empire triumphant over the perilous trials which lately occurred.

If you hesitate in the course which Protestant ascendancy, and political expediency require you to pursue, peruse the Parliamentary orations contained in “Protestant Principles.” These must dissipate whatever visionary dreams, or theoretic illusions, may warp the undecided judgment. The Statesmen, who have uttered those sentiments in the Senate, are individuals of no inferior repute—some have risen by their own splendid abilities, and after perseverance in the advocacy of their country’s weal, to the highest and most responsible constitu-

tional dignities. Let their orations be perused with attention. They satisfactorily refute the unauthenticated assertions of your opponents, while they promulge those principles that have induced them, and which should influence you, to maintain unimpaired, the establishments of the realm in Church and State.

But, “the state of Ireland requires amelioration.” Granted. The boon should be adequate to the necessity. How will you ascertain the real situation of that country, and the remedies requisite for its efficient improvement? Peruse the minutes of evidence before the Parliamentary committees—read the reports of Parliamentary commissioners,—with the declarations of the Protestant nobility, gentry, and clergy residing in that kingdom—but, form not your opinions from the speeches of those non-residents who never visit that island, but to exhaust its resources, or perhaps to distraint, and lord over its unfortunate peasantry.

“ Though poor the peasant’s hut, his feasts though small,
He sees his little lot, the lot of all;
Sees no contiguous palace rear its head,
To shame the meanness of his humble shed.”

Ireland, in the first instance, requires the suppression of illegal and unconstitutional political associations. These have proved, and yet continue, the greatest bane to the prosperity of the kingdom. When they are suppressed, let capital be procured from those non-residents, who, deriving very considerable revenue from their estates in that portion

of the empire,—contribute *not* towards its local rates, or general assessments,—and have never contributed aught towards the improvement of the country, excepting their illusory passionate harangues. Let this be effected by the following mode—*that all those who possess property in Ireland to the amount of 300l. per annum, and upwards, and who reside not in that kingdom for two months in every year, become subject to a tax of 5 per cent. on their net Irish income.* The sum derivable from this source, would amount to nearly 100,000l. *per annum.* This should be apportioned to the erection of comfortable villages, the establishment of manufactories, the diffusion of education, and rendering, by every possible means, the peasantry, orderly, industrious, and intelligent—“*Absenteeism,*” said the Earl of Liverpool, “combined with the great subdivision of property, have occasioned an increase of population, to a most enormous extent; this has brought the country (Ireland) into a state of beggary, and *hence have sprung all the disorders of the State.*”*

The introduction of capital into Ireland, would, necessarily, promote a due cultivation of the soil—the product of which could be easily appropriated to various useful purposes. If landed proprietors temporarily resided there, it would prevent a description of individuals who have uniformly proved detrimental to the peace and improvement of the country; if they do not reside, is it not natural,—

* Speech of Earl of Liverpool, see “Protestant Principles”, p. 55.

is it not just, that *they* should contribute towards the happiness of a people, and the prosperity of a kingdom, whence they derive very considerable revenue? If comfortable villages were erected, and manufactories established, these would powerfully tend to repress disturbances, and prevent the peasantry being made the tools of evil-minded incendiaries, who scatter, at present, among them, the fire-brand of turmoil and sedition. Finally, if education were diffused in every district, if the peasantry were rendered orderly, industrious, and intelligent, it would benefit the nation generally, but in particular, the Government, whose enactments being duly regarded, would render the adoption of rigorous measures unnecessary, which would naturally diminish the military force now stationed there, and that, in the present condition of affairs, is unquestionably requisite to protect the loyal, and to tranquillize the kingdom.

These measures would considerably facilitate the influence of the benign sun of that auspicious Reformation, which is daily irradiating Ireland, with indubitable proofs of the wisdom and providence of the Most High! No longer can the Roman Catholic Priesthood coerce the people from examining their tenets—they have *dared to think* for themselves, they are determined to act on their own judgment and discretion. Hundreds are weekly “emancipating” their intellects from the trammels of bigotry, of ignorance, and of superstition. The glorious measure is confined to

no particular district, nor class of society,—its blessings are diffusing themselves, and reign uncontrolled from north to south, from east to west. The consummation—the blissful anticipation of all wise, and benevolent, and religious Protestants,—has arrived;—within the past few months, thousands have discarded the dogmas of men—have conformed to the *ancient religion of Ireland*,*—and have founded their belief on CHILLINGWORTH'S declaration that—“*the Bible, the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants.*”

What has produced this inestimable Reformation? What causes have contributed to the great changes now progressing in every district of Ireland? “The first,” says the beneficent and illustrious LORD FARNHAM, “is the increasing knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. Notwithstanding all the efforts of the Romish Priesthood to keep the Bible a sealed book to the people, the light of the Gospel has broken forth, and shone over this benighted land, in despite of their exertions?”—“The second cause may be traced to the opposition given by the Romish Priests to every system of moral and religious education. This operates most injuriously on the temporal as well as the spiritual interests of the peasantry.”—“The third cause may be found in the pecuniary exactions of the Priests. These are extremely heavy on an impoverished people. Nothing is to be had without payment; every rite has its

* In the Appendix to “Protestant Principles” will be found such important facts as evidently demonstrate that Popery was *not* the ancient religion of Ireland.

price, which is rigidly exacted. To this may be added the modern system of taxation—the new Catholic rent—the old Catholic rent—the freeholders' fund, &c." Besides, "the conduct of the Roman Catholic Priests at the late general election, has greatly tended to impair their authority with the people. The latter found themselves merely political instruments in the hands of the Priests—worked as puppets to suit the convenience and forward the views of persons with whom they had no common interest, and sacrificed to the ambition of every speculating adventurer in pursuit of his own personal aggrandizement. They found themselves separated from their landlords—alienated from their best friends—set in direct opposition to their own interests; and, at length, having detected the fraud practised against them, they felt inclined to repay the treachery by withdrawing wholly from the influence of their betrayers."* Such are the causes assigned by the noble-minded and highly-esteemed promoter of this ineffably important measure.

That the new Reformation must eventually confer incalculable advantages on Ireland is manifest. For centuries the mass of its inhabitants have been deluded, benighted, and misled. But the Roman Catholic population have resolved to "emancipate" themselves from the yoke that presses on their intellects, and consciences—"a yoke that centuries ago has been shaken off by countries less civilized,

* Right Hon. Lord Farnham's Speech at Cavan, January 26th, 1827, p. 21—24.

as well as by the most civilized countries in Europe, England and Scotland." They have determined on mental enfranchisement. They peruse the Bible to ascertain the religion of Christ, which they contrast with the dogmas and canons of the Romish Church. They have asserted their claim to the indefeasible birthright of mankind—of deciding for themselves—they demand that spiritual freedom which is their inalienable privilege. For, "He is a freeman whom the truth makes free, and all are slaves beside."

PROTESTANTS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE! You have been informed that tolerant and liberal principles, forsooth, are engrafted on the Romish Church. What is the fact? Look to America! where an improved spirit might naturally be expected in this system—where free institutions are said to be founded, and liberal doctrines are reported to flourish—yet even in the enlightened, and civilized, and emancipated republics of South America, it was recently decreed, *that the public exercise of any other than the Roman Catholic religion should not be tolerated!* Look to liberal France! where the law of sacrilege, so incompatible with toleration, was lately enacted; and where the Jesuits are subverting every species of social happiness for the propagation of their maxims, and the ascendancy of their Order! Look to Spain! so subjugated to ecclesiastical domination, as that the people were induced to protest against a constitution which had delivered it from the merciless tortures of the Inquisition;—and where a manifesto is circulated under the name of the Arch-

bishop of Toledo, the second ecclesiastic of the Church of Rome, calling on the sovereign to wage war against the tolerant institutions of a neighbouring nation! In these states—in Italy—in all Roman Catholic continental dominions,—nay, even in Ireland, the same arrogance and domination prevail, on the part of the Romish Priesthood, as eminently characterized this clergy, on far-remote, and less enlightened epochs of the world. *Semper eadem.*

Such being the true position of the case—the temporal power of the Romish Church having been restored in divers nations—the Jesuits having re-established their dangerous institutions in various districts of the United Kingdom,—is it prudent,—is it necessary,—is it just to the faithful and constitutional Protestants, to dismantle the remaining barriers of our Establishment in Church and State? Are the partisans of the POPE to legislate for our laws, our liberties, and our religion? Is the Pope by *his* bishops, *his* vicars-apostolic, *his* thousands of priests and lay subjects to found an *imperium in imperio* within our tolerant, and unsubjected, and independent kingdom? Will his holiness grant similar power to the Protestants of England? Will he allow Protestants to exercise a co-equal influence in his conclaves and councils, with that demanded by his adherents in these realms? Will he suffer the Protestants of Britain to co-operate in framing laws for the Church of Rome?

The Protestantism of England is the key-stone of Protestant principles in Europe. Protestant states

estimate England with an equal filial admiration, if not more ardent devotion, than Roman Catholic nations do that of Rome. If then, equal privileges be solicited, let equal boons be conceded. If England, through her present Premier, (as he recently declared,) be about to effectuate a measure pronounced by the statutes of the realm illegal and unconstitutional—if he enter into a *concordat* with the Pope, let that Premier remember to obtain reciprocal privileges for his Protestant fellow-countrymen. If otherwise—if Rome retain her power—if she yield not to those terms—if her imperious domination be re-established in England—let that Premier beware, how he debases the sovereignty of his King—how he tarnishes the glory of our legislative councils—how he humbles our national superiority—how he depresses the honour of ENGLAND—

“ This royal throne of kings, this scepter'd isle,
 This earth of Majesty, this seat of Mars,
 This other Eden, demi-paradise ;
 This fortress, built by Nature for herself,
 Against infection and the hand of war ;
 This happy breed of men, this little world ;
 This precious stone set in the silver sea,
 Which serves it in the office of a wall,
 Or as a moat defensive to a house,
 Against the envy of less happier lands !”

W. G.

MIDDLE TEMPLE,
 May 12th, 1827.

PROTESTANT PRINCIPLES.

SPEECH

OF

H. R. H. FREDERICK, DUKE OF YORK.

IN the House of Lords, April 25th, 1825, on presenting a Petition from the Dean and Canons of Windsor, against further concessions to the Roman Catholics, His late Royal Highness FREDERICK, DUKE OF YORK, Heir Presumptive to the British Crown, made the following eloquent, perspicuous, constitutional, and truly Protestant declaration, well worthy the first subject of the State, and an illustrious member of the House of BRUNSWICK.

MY LORDS.—I have been requested to present to your lordships the Petition of the Dean and Canons of Windsor, praying that no further concessions be made to the Roman Catholics. I consider it unnecessary, in bringing before your lordships the petition of so learned and respectable a body, to assure you that it is worded so as to ensure its reception; but, before I move that it be read, I must be permitted to say a few words.

Sensible, my Lords, as I am of my want of habit and ability to take a part in your lordships' debates, it is not without the greatest reluctance that I venture to trespass upon your time and attention; but I feel that there are occasions when every man owes it to his country, and to his station, to declare his sentiments; and no opportunity can, in my opinion, offer,

which requires more imperiously the frank avowal of them than the present, when your lordships are called upon to make a total change in the fundamental principles of the constitution, and, in my view of the question, to strike at the very root of its existence.

My Lords.—Twenty-eight years have elapsed since this question was first agitated, under the most awful circumstances, while this country was engaged in a most arduous and expensive, though just and glorious, war; the agitation of it was the cause of a most serious and alarming illness to an illustrious personage now no more, (George III.) whose exalted character and virtues, and whose parental affection for his people will render his memory ever dear to this country; it also produced the temporary retirement from his late majesty's councils of one of the most able, enlightened, and honest statesmen (PITT) of whom this country can boast.

Upon this question, my lords, we are now called to decide; and, from the first moment of its agitation to the present, I have not for one instant hesitated, or felt a doubt, as to the propriety of the line of conduct I have adopted in reference to it.

I must also call your Lordships' attention to the great change of language and sentiments which has taken place since the subject was first introduced among the advocates for Roman Catholic emancipation.

My Lords.—At first, the most zealous of these, cautiously, and yet strenuously, endeavoured to impress upon the minds of the people, that Roman Catholic emancipation ought not to be granted without establishing strong and effectual barriers against any encroachment on the Protestant ascendancy. But, how changed is now their language! Your lordships are now required to surrender every principle of the constitution, and to deliver us up, bound hand and foot, to the mercy and generosity of the Roman Catholics, without any assurance even that they will be satisfied with such fearful concessions.

I have, my Lords, upon a former occasion, taken the liberty of stating my sentiments fully upon the subject, and endea-

voured to convey to your lordships, that no person was more decidedly inclined to toleration than his late majesty; but it must be admitted, there is a great difference between toleration, participation, and emancipation. I will not now enter into this discussion, convinced as I am that, if the bill should again be brought under your consideration, its merits will be much more ably discussed by others of your lordships. There are, however, one or two points which appear to me to have been kept out of view in the different debates that have occurred in various places, and which seem to me of such vital importance that I cannot help touching upon them.

The first is, my Lords, the situation in which the Church of England will be placed should this measure of Roman Catholic emancipation pass. If I be mistaken, I shall doubtless be set right; but, I have always understood that the Established Church of England stands in a very different situation from any other religious persuasion in the world; different even from that of the Sectarians in this country. The Established Church is subject to its own government, and does not admit the interference of the civil authorities. It is placed under the authority of the king as the head of it, and under the control of Parliament, so much so, that the Church is not only not represented as a body in the lower House of Parliament, but no clergyman is admitted to a seat in it.

Surely, your lordships cannot wish to place the Established Church of England upon a worse footing than any other church within these realms; nor allow the Roman Catholics, who not only refuse to submit to our rules, but who deny any authority of the civil power over their church, to legislate for the Established Church; which must be the case if they be admitted to seats in either House of Parliament.

The other point, my Lords, to which I have to advert, is one which I feel to be of a more delicate nature. I must, therefore, begin by stating to your lordships that I speak only my own individual sentiments, as I must not be supposed to utter in this House the sentiments of any other person. I am sensible that, by what I am about to say, I shall subject

myself to the scoffs and jeers of some, and to the animadversions of others; but from speaking conscientiously my own feelings and sentiments, I will by no apprehension whatever be appalled or deterred.

My Lords.—I wish to ask, whether your lordships have considered the situation in which you might place the King, or whether your lordships recollect the oath which his Majesty has taken at the altar, to his people, upon his coronation? I beg, my lords, to read the words of that oath:—“I will, to the utmost of my power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law;—and I will preserve unto the bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them, or any of them.”

Your Lordships must remember that ours is a Protestant King who knows no mental reservation, and whose situation is different from that of any other person in this country. I, my lords, and every other person in this country, can be released from an oath by the authority of Parliament; but the King cannot. The oath, as I have always understood, is a solemn obligation entered into by the person who takes it, from which no act of his own can release him; but the King is the third part of the State, without whose voluntary consent no act of the legislature can be valid, and he cannot relieve himself from the obligation of an oath.

I fear, my lords, that I have trespassed too long upon your attention, and I thank your lordships for the patience with which you have heard me. If I have expressed myself too warmly, especially in the latter part of what I have said, I must appeal to your liberality. I feel, my lords, the subject most forcibly; and it affects me yet more deeply, when I remember that to its agitation must be ascribed that severe illness, and ten years of misery, which clouded the existence of my illustrious and beloved father. I shall therefore conclude with assuring your lordships, that I have uttered my honest and conscientious sentiments, founded upon principles which I have imbibed from my earliest youth; to the justice

of which I have subscribed, after serious consideration, when I attained more mature years; and these are the principles to which I adhere, and which I will maintain and act up to, to the latest moment of my existence, whatever may be my situation of life—So help me God!

S P E E C H

OF

H. R. H. ERNEST AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF CUMBERLAND.

When the Roman Catholic Petition was presented in the House of Lords, May 10th, 1805, his Royal Highness ERNEST AUGUSTUS, DUKE OF CUMBERLAND, delivered the following concise, but truly Protestant address, containing a brief portrait of the motives which actuated our constitutional ancestors in selecting the BRUNSWICK FAMILY to wield the regal sceptre o'er this realm, and elucidating the principles which immortalize the memory of various magnanimous members of this illustrious lineage.

MY LORDS.—After the very able manner in which my noble friend* has explained to this House the reasons, which, I trust, will induce your lordships to reject the proposal of the noble lord, it will not be necessary for me to enter diffusely into this question. But, when I reflect on what were the circumstances which brought our family to the throne, and when I consider what is the object of the petition on your table, it is impossible for me to remain totally silent.

With respect, my lords, to the circumstances which brought our family to the British throne, your lordships well know that they originated in the Revolution. The great object of that revolution was to secure the religion and liberties of these realms. These objects were confirmed by the act of settlement, by the declaration of rights, by the oath of su-

* Lord Hawkesbury, now Earl of Liverpool.

premacv and abjuration, and by the succession to the crown in the Protestant line. To maintain and uphold all these, my lords, our family was called to the throne. And whatever can militate against these principles, in the remotest degree, it is my bounden duty, as a member of this family, and as a member of your lordships' House, to resist.

For this purpose, my Lords, I must ask, what is the object of that petition? It is to enable the Roman Catholics to hold offices of trust and power in the state. Was it not to oppose such a system that the Revolution originated? Was it not the very life and soul of that memorable transaction, to secure the rights of church and state? Are we then going to undo all that the Revolution has done? Bear in mind, my lords, the scenes that preceded the Revolution; they are strong proofs that the participation of equal power by Roman Catholics and Protestants is a thing incompatible with the principles of both. Are you not already convinced, by facts and history, that it is impossible for Protestants and Roman Catholics to agree in the administration of political power?

What then, my Lords, will follow if the Roman Catholics be admitted to the great offices of trust? You will soon see what, thank God, till now we have only read: we shall experience the same confusion and bloodshed which stained all the reigns from MARY, who began with granting them a dispensing power to hold offices of state, down to JAMES, who ended with the dispensing power in their favour. He hurled himself from the throne by conferring on them offices of trust and power, which afterwards drew down on them all the weight of penal laws. I am justified, therefore, my lords, in concluding, that there can be no boon more fraught with mischief to king and subjects conferred than that prayed for in this petition. Not only, however, the awful experience of past times, but the temper of the present times, call upon us to pause, and to listen to the voice of the two great capitals of the empire, and of different counties in the United Kingdom, against this petition.

We know, my Lords, what are the feelings and sentiments of this nation with respect to the causes and consequences

of the Revolution. The memory of it is kept alive daily by the most solemn acts, when men are called to undertake public and corporate functions. His Majesty's subjects on such occasions swear to preserve his supremacy in ecclesiastical and civil matters. Does this petition acknowledge that supremacy in ecclesiastical matters? No! If then, my lords, you surrender the power of the state to those who deny that supremacy, you do not maintain that supremacy, you virtually abandon it.

Far be it from me, my Lords, to shackle or to fetter the conscience of any man; but, equally far be it from me, to pull down by rash innovation any of the venerable pillars of the constitution. All that can be given with reason and conscience I am prompt to give. But, my lords, the constitution I CANNOT, DARE NOT, WILL NOT, GIVE. I must uphold and support, with the last effort of my nature, the Establishment in Church and State, as the great step by which the House of Brunswick ascended that throne.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ELDON,

LORD CHANCELLOR OF ENGLAND.

ON the order of the day being read, in the House of Lords, April 17th, 1821, for resuming the adjourned debate, on the motion introduced by the Earl of Donoughmore, "That the Roman Catholic Disability Removal Bill be now read a second time," the Right Honourable and Learned LORD ELDON, the Lord Chancellor of England, having left the woolsack, addressed the House in the following eloquent, energetic, and constitutional language.

MY LORDS.—I must apologize to the House for taking so early an opportunity of expressing my sentiments. Upon

a question so important, I cannot be altogether silent; and I am unwilling to postpone asking for your lordships' attention, till that period when fatigue might disable me from giving my own attention sufficiently to the subject of debate. The question upon which the House is to decide, is, whether the bill should be read a second time? I am ready to say that it ought to be read a second time if the House approves its principle, and if the imperfections in its enactments were such as admitting of amendments and modifications, the bill amended and modified might, after all, in some sense be considered as a bill somewhat alike to that which the Commons had sent up. But, making this admission, I cannot bring myself to consent to the second reading of this bill.

My Lords.—I have heard with regret the observations of the noble earl (Donoughmore), with respect to my conduct, and that of another noble lord (Liverpool), when the first reading of this bill was proposed. Disrespect to the mover of this bill, I altogether disclaim. It is also a mistake on the part of the noble mover to suppose that the bill had been represented by me, or the other noble lord (Liverpool), as altogether unworthy of any consideration. What the bill has for its general object has been under consideration for nearly twenty years. What the particular provisions of this bill are, have, by rumour and report, and the votes upon the table, been so thoroughly understood before it was read a first time, that it is difficult to suppose, that in the progress of such a bill, if it is to proceed further, any new light can be thrown upon the subject of it. With respect to myself also, I trust that I may stand in some measure excused for an early and prompt interposition against a measure, which, whilst it seems to impose upon a lord chancellor, who under the bill may be the only lay servant of the crown in Great Britain necessarily a Protestant, the peculiar duty of watching over Protestant interests, appears to me necessarily and obviously to bring all those interests into extreme peril.

The noble earl (Darnley) who spoke last, declared his conviction, that this measure, or one of the same character, must sooner or later be carried. It may be so, but I shall,

nevertheless, feel it to be my duty, as attached to civil liberty and to religious liberty, (best protected by the Protestant Establishment in this country connecting its Church Establishment with an enlightened and liberal toleration,) to oppose the introduction and progress of every such measure as the present, through evil report and good report, as long as opposition to it can be offered. If the majority of the House should at any time finally determine that my opinions have been founded in error, I shall at least enjoy the satisfaction, which will result from a conviction that I have not willingly erred, and that I have most anxiously endeavoured to avoid error.

My Lords.—I now come to the question. Can your lordships pass *this* bill? Is this bill fit to be adopted? Are the enactments of *this* bill such as the House can approve of? I think I may assert that the House cannot pass *this* bill. It is however, I admit, a different question, whether the House should read the bill a second time, and resolve itself into a committee, to modify, alter, and amend it? To committing the bill I object, not only because I am averse to the principle of the bill, but because I cannot admit that we are in a committee, under colour of modifying, amending and altering, to propose and enact, (for such must be the case,) some measure in effect entirely new; this I think in all cases objectionable,—and with reference to the present important subject, peculiarly objectionable, upon the principles upon which I have always voted against going into committees respecting it, before specific measures be proposed as those which are to be adopted.

If it can be supposed that this bill, if the House went into a committee, could be reported upon without very material variation, destroying, in a great measure, if I may so express myself, its identity, the Roman Catholic would know what he has to hope for, and the Protestant what he has to dread. But, in my judgment, any bill or measure which could come out of a committee, must be altogether different from that which the House, if it read *this* bill a second time, would propose to commit; and therefore, the further pro-

ceeding on this bill appears to me as objectionable as former motions, always rejected by this House, were, when, without the introduction of bills, the House was moved to form committees to consider generally what measures might be introduced; motions which, if adopted, would probably have raised expectations in the minds of the Roman Catholics, which could not be gratified, and have created alarms in the minds of the Protestants, which the legislature ought not to excite.

The noble lord (Darnley) who spoke last, enumerated the names of many illustrious men, existing in our time, though now no more, who had been advocates for some measures of emancipation, and, amongst others, the illustrious name of Pitt; and the noble lord who has moved the second reading of the bill has been pleased to represent those who have opposed these measures, as constantly changing their ground;—a charge which may, with much justice, be stated as clearly observable in the conduct of those who have advocated the measures. No man living had a more affectionate regard for Mr. Pitt, or ever held in higher veneration the virtues, the talents, and wisdom of that great man, whose name will be held in everlasting remembrance. In common with my country, I owe to that great statesman the highest obligations;—the debt of gratitude, which I individually owe to him is also large. I feel it, however, to be my unbending duty not to surrender my own opinions, unless I can be satisfied that that surrender can be safely made. If, after the union with Ireland, that great man had been able to satisfy me, that ample securities could be obtained for the Protestants, whilst concessions were made to the Roman Catholics, I would have seconded all his purposes respecting concessions.

My Lords.—That securities were necessary, Mr. Pitt had always admitted; that they were necessary to secure the Protestant interest, and to quiet also the fears of the Protestant mind; but it had never yet been stated, and I presume, therefore, that no man had learnt from that great statesman—for my own part I never could learn—what se-

curities were to be proposed, and how the Roman Catholic mind was to be conciliated, and the Protestant mind at the same time divested of its apprehensions. That great man now lies buried in the sepulchres of mortality; but there is spared to us and the country a noble baron (Grenville) sitting near me, a friend to concessions to the Roman Catholics,—I sincerely believe a friend to the Established Church; a noble baron, to whom, notwithstanding all differences of opinions between us, I have ever looked up, and now regard with the highest respect and reverence, and who also, I have always understood, has considered securities as essential and necessary, if concessions were to be made.

We know not, my lords, now, what securities it was the purpose of Mr. Pitt to require. We do know that, in the course of the many years which have now elapsed since what is called Roman Catholic emancipation has been contemplated, no man has yet found out what securities he could propose on the part of the Protestants, which the Roman Catholics would give, as the price of what they were to receive. And what is the state of matters now? That the House has before it a bill, proposing concessions almost unlimited; but with securities, the only securities, I presume, which the wisdom of those who have introduced this bill could, after meditation for twenty years, suggest, quite inefficacious, if enacted; which the Roman Catholics will not only withhold, but which they deem it matter of gross insult to have had it proposed to them to give.

The bill, in its preamble, my lords, represents the Protestant succession to the crown, by the act for further limitation of it, to be established *permanently* and *inviolably*: and the united Church of England and Ireland, and that of Scotland, to be severally established *permanently* and *inviolably*. That after due consideration (where had, does not appear,) of the situation, dispositions, and conduct of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects (i. e. his Majesty's subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion), it appears fitting to extend to them the enjoyment of the established

constitution, thereby putting an end to religious jealousies, consolidating the Union, and uniting and knitting together the hearts of *all* his Majesty's subjects in one and the same interest. And then it recites that, by divers acts of parliament, the oaths of allegiance, supremacy, and abjuration, therein provided, are required to be taken for certain purposes therein mentioned.

It then, my lords, states the terms of the oath of supremacy,—that the Roman Catholics are ready to take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, in common with his Majesty's other subjects; but, that they entertain certain scruples, with respect to the oath of supremacy, inasmuch as they apprehend that the same might be construed to import a disclaimer of the spiritual authority, which they ascribe to the Pope or Church of Rome, in matters of religious belief. And then it enacts, that it shall be lawful for them in all cases, where the oath of supremacy is now by the law required to be taken, as a qualification for the holding or enjoying any civil right, office, or franchise, in lieu and place thereof, to make, take, and subscribe, the oath therein following. This oath contains a declaration against foreign jurisdiction “that in any manner conflicts or interferes with the duty of full and undivided allegiance, due to his Majesty from all his subjects, or with the civil duty and obedience, which is due to his courts, ecclesiastical and civil, in all matters concerning the legal rights of his subjects or any of them.” The act then proceeds to repeal all the acts requiring the declaration against transubstantiation, as relating solely to matters “of spiritual and religious belief, which do not in any wise affect or interfere with the allegiance or civil duty of his Majesty's subjects.” The act then contains a proviso, that it shall not alter the laws relative to the succession of the crown in the Protestant line, or respecting the marriages of the royal family, or the Act of Uniformity. It then proceeds to enumerate excepted cases, to regulate presentations to churches; and to make it unlawful for Roman Catholics to advise as to offices or preferments in the Church of England and Ireland, or that of Scotland. It requires

the persons holding the great seals of Great Britain and Ireland respectively, and the lord lieutenant and chief governors of Ireland, to be Protestants—disables Roman Catholics to vote at parish vestries, and provides in what courts the oaths of allegiance, abjuration, and the oath ordained by this statute, shall be taken.

Such, my lords, are the provisions of the bill, or rather of that part of it which does not immediately apply to what is to be required of persons exercising ecclesiastical functions, professing the Roman Catholic religion, and what is to be enacted as to bulls, dispensations, and other instruments coming from the See of Rome. With respect to such parts of the bill, as do so apply, little has been said in debate. Whether the Roman Catholics do or do not object to them, much of objection to them most reasonably may be urged; but probably the whole of this part of the bill has been found so unpalatable to the Roman Catholics, that little had been stated in debate respecting them—little but general expressions—or that they may be altered in the committee, with no very slight intimation, that, at last, we might safely act as to the Protestant interests, without any securities at all to be given by the Roman Catholics. And here I state that I am ready to admit that securities ought not to be required, if there is a well-founded opinion that concessions can be made without danger;—an opinion to which I cannot agree, and which, until this period, seems not to have been avowed, if entertained by anybody.

My Lords.—In all the debates upon this subject, it has been considered as wandering out of our line of duty, to consider these measures in what is called the religious view of them. Concession has, as to this, been too largely made. A right reverend prelate (Norwich), in the preceding evening, promulgated principles respecting the Church of Christ, upon which the legislature could not act with respect to any church, which, as a church of this world, is an Established Church. I have always felt that it is one of my first duties to maintain the established religion of the country. Fortunately for the country, it has adopted the purest system of

Christian faith in its established religion; by connecting with the laws which established its church, laws securing a liberal and enlightened toleration, as to those who dissent from its church—it has probably placed upon the best and surest foundations the civil and religious liberties of all who live in the kingdom.

But, my lords, we are told that all this is wrong, and that we should allow every body of Christians to take its chance in the world. I am of a different opinion. I shall ever assert that an established religion is a great benefit to a people—that the object of such an establishment is not to make the church political, but to make the state religious. Such is my firm persuasion—a persuasion so strongly entertained, that I would much rather see a less pure system of Christian faith established, with a liberal and enlightened toleration of those who differ from it, under which toleration we who adhere to the doctrines of our present Established Church might enjoy shelter and security without power, political power, than to see this country without an Established Church. Such, I say, must also have been the sentiments of all those great men who had concurred in establishing, and repeatedly refusing to shake, the provisions of the Corporation and Test Acts, which, according to Blackstone, “secure both our civil and religious liberties:” among the latter of whom are to be numbered Mr. Pitt and others, who have at different times meditated and proposed the repeal of the laws respecting Roman Catholics.

My Lords.—It appears at first sight unaccountable how it should happen, that those who brought forward the present measure, a measure which they announced “as putting an end to all jealousies, as uniting and knitting together the hearts of all his Majesty’s subjects in one and the same interest,” have not bestowed the benefit of one single enactment upon their Protestant dissenting brethren. When the constitution was settled at the time of the Revolution—a settlement now about to be shaken—the Church Establishment was secured; the Toleration Act passed at the same time, in favour of those Protestants who could not adhere to

this Church Establishment—the members of both were thought to have contributed to the overthrow of Popery and Tyranny. The present measure relieves the Roman Catholics from disabilities, from which it aims not, in any manner or degree, to relieve our Protestant brethren. Can this be right? Can the legislature think of doing this? No—nor can it be so intended. If you agree, my lords, to this bill, those who bring it before you for adoption, well know—cannot but know, that you must repeal—that you cannot refuse to repeal, the Corporation and Test Acts of England. They know this—it behoves the House not to forget it, for the sake of the Established Church. If it is fitting and just to communicate to the Roman Catholics, in the measure and extent proposed by this bill, “the benefits and advantages of the constitution and government happily established in this kingdom,” according to the preamble, it must be equally fitting and just with respect to our Protestant brethren. It should not, however, be forgotten, that our constitution and government, as established, is a constitution and government, which does not consider political power as one of “the benefits and advantages” to which all subjects are equally entitled.

My Lords.—As it is fashionable in this House to refer to Blackstone, as an author, your lordships may, in his works, find the grounds and principles upon which the distinction, as to the grant of political power, or the withholding political power, rests; and the grounds upon which, however friendly that writer was to the relaxation or abolition of the penal laws against Roman Catholics in given events, he holds that, “whilst they acknowledge a foreign power superior to the sovereignty of this kingdom, they cannot complain, if the laws of the kingdom will not extend to them what it has done for Protestant dissenters, or complain if the laws of the kingdom will not acknowledge them upon the footing of good subjects.” A doctrine equally held by Selden, Locke, Clarendon, Somers, and others of the greatest name in our history. It is said, however, that they do not now acknowledge such a foreign power, or, at least, if they have heretofore

acknowledged such a power, they will utterly, or, as far as reason can require of them, disavow all jurisdiction now, that is foreign, if they, according to this proposed act, take the oaths of allegiance and abjuration, and the oaths specified in the proposed act.

And we are told, my lords, that the Protestant succession to the Crown, and the Church of England and Ireland, and the Church of Scotland, are already, by the acts mentioned in this bill, permanently and inviolably secured:—an acknowledgment this, that they ought to be so secured; that they are by the effect of these acts permanently and inviolably established and secured, if the means and provisions adopted by these acts are continued in force permanently and inviolably, may be granted. But if the means and provisions ordained by these acts are destroyed by your proposed legislation, and nothing is to remain of these acts but declarations that your Constitution in Church and State is Protestant, you have nothing better than what has been called a paper or parchment constitution.

My Lords.—To ascertain the effect of what we are doing, it is necessary to see what we are undoing, and to trace, therefore, in some measure through our history, what the supremacy of the Crown, and the allegiance of the subject, mean. With respect to the oath of allegiance, this bill proposes no modification of it. There are many statutes respecting the oath of allegiance: but the common law not only recognizes what is called virtual or implied allegiance, but also expressed allegiance—that is, allegiance expressed by oath—the common law oath of fidelity and allegiance. Allegiance is undivided allegiance. The common law and the statute law look to undivided allegiance. The supremacy of the Crown is an indivisible supremacy; the allegiance due to the Crown is an indivisible allegiance.

Passing over that long and eventful period of our history previous to the Reformation, in which the Crown and its subjects were so often involved in contests with the Pope and the See of Rome, often working the degradation of the Crown and kingdom by abject submission, sometimes

asserting in those struggles the honour of both, and exhibiting a display of the most ardent love of liberty;—it is from the commencement of the Reformation down to the present time, that we must look more especially to the course of events, and the nature of our laws, with reference to the present rights, liberties, and duties of the Crown and the subjects in matters, civil, ecclesiastical, and spiritual. It is therefore, unnecessary to trouble the House with the history of all that passed in this kingdom from about the time of Edward III. and before, to the period of the Reformation, respecting Papal provisions of benefices, the purchasing of benefices, the appeals to Rome, pensions, Peterpence, dispensations, bulls, rescripts, &c. and other Papal usurpations. The supremacy of the Crown had been most solemnly asserted and re-asserted by Henry VIII. and Edward VI. The acts passed in the reigns of those sovereigns, it would be worthy of those whom I address, accurately to acquaint themselves with. Not that those acts were the foundations of the Crown's supremacy in ecclesiastical matters, or of this doctrine of the Church of England respecting it: they asserted a supremacy inherent in the Crown according to the constitution—they did not create it, and I am mistaken if we had not an *Ecclesia Anglicana*, with the King its supreme head, before the Pope of Rome could be said to have endeavoured to obtain any footing in this island.

To determine, my lords, what was the supremacy, which the Pope did claim in this country, it may be important to see what was the supremacy which was claimed for and on behalf of the Pope. I wish your lordships to read the statute of the 1st Philip and Mary, cap. 8. Few have read it: but a more humiliating, a more degrading, a more debasing national record, I believe, does not exist in the annals of the world. Observe there, how many acts of parliament touching temporal rights are repealed, as contrary to the Pope's supremacy acting *in ordine et spiritualia*; and then let it be determined by the old rules of construction of statutes, by looking at others *in pari materia*—by the *contemporanea expositio*;—by seeing what was the mischief contemplated,

and the remedy proposed—what was claimed by the Pope as belonging to his supremacy—and what Elizabeth in her oath of supremacy, and James I. in his oath of obedience, meant to deny to the Pope, and to assert as inherent in their crowns. Let it be so determined what the Pope of Rome claimed, if represented as claiming only a spiritual supremacy. These are, what Lord Hale calls, the two eminent oaths of supremacy and obedience, observing, “that the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Crown is a most unquestionable right of it,—that the Pope had made great usurpations upon it,—that the statutes rejoined and restored it to the Crown,—that the Papal encroachments, yea, even in matters civil, under the loose pretence *in ordine et spiritualia*, had obtained a great strength, notwithstanding the security the Crown had by the oaths of fealty and allegiance. So that there was a necessity to unrivet these usurpations by substituting, by authority of Parliament, a recognition by oath of the King’s supremacy, as well in causes ecclesiastical as civil.”

When Parliament to the oath of allegiance added this oath of supremacy, there could be no necessity of further explaining the common law oath of allegiance: and if the present oath of supremacy remains unaltered, the oath of allegiance will require no alteration now. But, my lords, if allegiance means undivided allegiance to a sovereign supreme head in Church and State, it may not perhaps be otherwise than open to much doubt, whether if, for the sake of Roman Catholics, the oath of supremacy is explained by statute, the oath of allegiance may not also require for them explanation.

It seems to me, my lords, that Locke, writing on Toleration, thought, if his meaning was such as it may be supposed to have been, that the Church of Rome can have no right even to be *tolerated* by the magistrate—“as constituted on such a bottom, that all those, who enter it, deliver themselves up to the service and protection of another prince, who has power to persuade the members of his church, to do whatever he lists, either as purely religious, or *in ordine et spiritualia*.” It is most singular that our oaths of supremacy were adopted for the express purpose of *unrivetting* those

errors, which, notwithstanding our oaths of allegiance, had crept in, in consequence of the Roman Catholics deeming to be spiritual whatever they thought proper to consider as spiritual, and that it is proposed to us to reform the oath of supremacy by substituting another, which will leave it open to the Roman Catholic to introduce the very evils which the oath of supremacy was intended to guard against.

In the votes on the table it appears that it was at first meditated to explain the oath of supremacy by reference to Queen Elizabeth's injunctions, to the statute of the fifth year of her reign, and the 37th Article of the Church of England. Either I, or those who thought of so constructing the oath of supremacy, do not understand the English language. Neither the admonition, nor the statute, nor the article admits of this,—an article which expressly asserts that the Bishop of Rome has no jurisdiction in this realm.

My Lords.—The preamble of this proposed act states scruples inasmuch as the Roman Catholics apprehend, that “the oath of supremacy might in part import a disclaimer of the Pope's spiritual authority in matters of religious belief;”—and what in matters of religious belief that authority may require from them has not been ascertained by inquiry here made, or information here given, and seems not to be very easily ascertainable. The proposed oath does not, however, assert that he has no other spiritual authority “than in matters of religious belief?” but that he has not any “authority, which, in any manner, conflicts or interferes with the duty of full and undivided allegiance, which, by the laws of this realm, is due to his Majesty, or with the civil duty and obedience which is due to his courts civil and ecclesiastical, in all matters concerning the legal rights of his subjects, or any of them.” It is quite obvious that this leaves it entirely with the party taking the oath to determine for himself what does or does not so conflict or interfere with such allegiance, duty, and obedience. And of how many errors may the removal, or, as Lord Hale expresses it, the *unrivetting*, become the parent, when the Roman Catholic shall (as he heretofore determined for himself what was spiritual—and what

portion of spiritual obedience he could withhold, though he owed full and undivided allegiance)—when he shall determine hereafter for himself, what authority of the Pope does or does not conflict or interfere with the duty of such full and undivided allegiance, and such civil duty and obedience, as is mentioned in this proposed act.

My Lords.—That it is peculiarly necessary to consider alterations of this kind in oaths with jealousy, is a proposition which experience may sanction. In the oath permitted by the Irish Act of the 13th and 14th of George III., the Irish Roman Catholic swears to maintain the succession of the Crown, not in the heirs of the body of Princess Sophia, *being Protestants*, but in his Majesty's royal family,—and not in that family, *being Protestants*. If this oath was the oath regulating the conduct of the Irish Roman Catholics, its effects would be to be estimated, if there should be in that family, upon the demise of the Crown, an individual *not Protestant*. It at least demonstrates how carefully the effect of every word in a prescribed oath should be considered.

After the English Act for the relief of the Roman Catholics passed in 1791, in 1793 that act passed in Ireland, from which a noble marquis last night read the oath which it prescribes. That noble lord observed that, after renouncing and repudiating certain principles and supposed articles of faith, and disavowing any intention to subvert the present Church Establishment, for the purpose of a Roman Catholic Establishment in its stead, the concluding part of the oath was thus expressed:—"I do solemnly swear, that I will not exercise any privilege, to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb or weaken the Protestant religion and Protestant government in this kingdom." I now hold in my hand a print of that act of Parliament: I have also looked into the printed Statute Books, and I find that the words are not "weaken *or* disturb," but "weaken *and* disturb;" and it is observable that the print of the statute, which I hold in my hand, is peculiarly calculated to draw attention to this distinction,—the conjunctive *and* being printed in large characters, and made the subject of the following comment. The

printer appears to be Mr. Coglan. The Irish Roman Catholic will probably have no difficulty in finding the commentator in a member of his own church. The comment is thus expressed:—"All are here agreed that, to violate the above clause, it is necessary to disturb and weaken not only the Protestant religion, but likewise the Protestant government. They are connected, evidently, by the conjunctive *and*, without any comma after religion. Both must be disturbed and weakened, not in any manner, but, precisely by the exercise of the privileges now granted. In other respects, we are in our former situations as to preaching, teaching, writing, &c. Weaken after disturb appears rather an expletive than a word conveying a distinct meaning, for it is implied in disturb; as whoever intends to disturb, *à fortiori*, intends to weaken. Hence, the expression is generally understood, and so it has been explained by every one consulted on it, to weaken by disturbance. Indeed, if *or* was between the word disturb and the word weaken, as it was proposed to be, the signification would be changed and inadmissible." Surely this sort of reasoning upon the terms of an oath should teach us to use great caution when we are prescribing in what terms we shall require oaths of security to be taken.

My Lords.—In these two Irish statutes, in the English statute of 1791, much, very much is prescribed in the oaths therein respectively required, of which no mention whatever is contained in the oath required by the proposed bill. But this is not all that is necessary to be pressed upon the attention of the House. If the Bill of 1813, introduced into the House of Commons, and which had nearly passed that House, is looked into, it will be seen that in 1813, an oath as comprehensive was thought necessary to be taken by Roman Catholics to entitle them to relief, as the oaths required by the statutes of 1791 and 1793; nay, more comprehensive. The preamble of the proposed bill asserts, that Parliament has had due consideration of this matter. Has this consideration enabled us to learn upon what grounds it was thought necessary in 1791 and in 1793, and even so lately as

in 1813, to require in the securities of oaths so much more from the Roman Catholics than this bill proposes in that species of security to require? Has this been in any manner explained to the House? It may be material to know what number of Roman Catholics have taken the oaths prescribed by the statutes of 1791 and 1793. Upon a former occasion we learnt that a very few had taken the oaths prescribed by these statutes of 1791 and 1793. Of these individuals of the Roman Catholics, who have taken the oaths prescribed by these statutes it may not be necessary now to require an oath in the same terms. But the House ought either to know why the proposed oath is so different from that which was deemed necessary even in 1813, or to be informed how far the Roman Catholics have or have not taken the oaths prescribed by former statutes.

My Lords.—There is another very material observation to be made, upon a comparison of the proposed bill and these former statutes of 1791 and 1793. If they are read, and their numerous provisoes attended to, many of those provisoes, it must be admitted, were either unnecessary in those bills, or they ought to be inserted in this. Take, for example, one out of many; one, which what is said to be passing in the kingdom may make it not unfit to point out, viz. the proviso to prevent the founding of any monastic or religious order. Many other provisoes might be mentioned.

Another extraordinary effect of this oath, my lords, which is proposed in a statute which is to unite the hearts of all his Majesty's subjects, is—that no greater security by oath being heretofore required from his Majesty's Protestant subjects than from his subjects professing the Roman Catholic religion, the Protestant is now to be required to take a stronger oath in support of that which his conscience would lead him, without taking any oath, to support, than the Roman Catholic is to take, whose conscience might lead him if not bound by oath to support it, to disturb or weaken it. The Protestant is to swear, that the foreign prince or prelate has no jurisdiction whatever. The Roman Catholic, that he has all the jurisdiction, which he, the Roman Catholic,

thinks does not conflict or interfere with allegiance, civil duty, and obedience, as he understands them. Should this bill pass with the present form of oath, the same Parliament would seem to require some of his subjects to swear, that no foreign prince or prelate has any jurisdiction in this country, and others of them to swear, that a foreign prelate has some jurisdiction in this country. The Parliament either understands that such is the effect of the oath now to be proposed to the Roman Catholics, or what it understands is to others not altogether intelligible.

My Lords.—Without adverting more, as yet, to what is or is not to be the state of ecclesiastical persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, under what may be called the second part of this bill—originally another, or second bill—how would a Roman Catholic clergyman deal with such a case as the following? Two persons intermarry, being in a state of consanguinity, such as does not prevent a marriage between them being valid according to our law—a consanguinity which is said, however, to form what is an *impedimentum dirimens*. Should a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic feel it to be his duty to refuse the sacrament to the parties, unless they voluntarily separate, it is to be supposed that he would act according to that duty. It has been understood that such would be his duty; he discharges that duty; and, by the exercise of it, induces the woman to separate herself from the person, according to our law, her husband. The husband, on the contrary, thinks proper to sue for a restitution of conjugal rights, and compels the wife to return. If such a case as this could happen, no reasoning, no casuistry, no distinction between what is temporal and what is ecclesiastical, between what is civil and what is spiritual, could lead a legislature or a state to the endurance of it, or entitle an ecclesiastic to claim the character of a good subject, or to assert that he was doing nothing which conflicted or interfered with allegiance, civil duty, and obedience, when he was using spiritual means in putting asunder those, who, according to the law of his country, were joined together.

To return to the period when, after what Hale calls *the*

Revolutions on the death of Henry VIII. Edward VI. and Mary, revolutions in the struggles between regal and papal supremacy, Queen Elizabeth asserted strongly the supremacy of the Crown, the rights of her subjects, and the independence of the national church. The progress of Protestantism and the Reformation, my lords, had not at that period been such as to enable any sovereign to accomplish for the country what could only be gradually attained, as the necessity of further legislation became, from events, to be evident. It was found necessary from time to time between that period and the Revolution of 1688, and at the period of that Revolution, further to provide, then finally and effectually to provide, for the security of those great objects, between the maintenance of which, and the attempts to weaken and destroy them, the quiet and happiness of the country had been so often, in the mean time, disturbed. Passing over these unquiet times, let us advert to what was settled at the Revolution for the maintenance of a Protestant church and state, by enactments then ordained, and by reference made at that time to the statutes which had before passed in and subsequent to Elizabeth's reign, and the operation of some of which was then anxiously continued.

My Lords.—In the discussions upon such a bill as is now proposed, it cannot, too, be wholly without use to request the House to remember how anxiously during the reign of Charles II. it was sought, on the one hand, to exclude a Popish successor from the throne; and how anxiously, on the other, the struggle was made, but in vain, to convince our ancestors that a Popish king might be so surrounded with counsellors, as to secure a Protestant church and government. It seems, according to modern notions, that both may be safe, if a king is Protestant, and his counsellors in and out of parliament are all Roman Catholics. The statute of the 5th Elizabeth had required members of the House of Commons to take the oath of Supremacy, but not the members of this House. The Corporation Act, 13 Charles II. cap. 1, “for the preservation of the public peace in Church and State,” had required persons admitted into corporations

to take the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and the Sacrament. The statute of Uniformity had made large provisions for the security of the Established Church, 13th and 14th Charles II. cap. 4. The Test Act, 25th Charles II. cap. 2, "to prevent dangers which might happen from Popish recusants," had required all persons, peers as well as others, who should bear any office, civil or military, to take the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and the Sacrament, according to the usage of the Church of England; and Parliament having recorded, "that all those laws had not the desired effect," by the act 30 Charles II. cap. 2, required peers and members of the House of Commons to take the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and to make the declaration against transubstantiation, the necessity of making which by anybody but the King is intended to be abrogated by this act.

James II., the endeavours made to exclude him from the throne having failed, succeeded to the crown, making his will the law of the land, and claiming that dispensing power, which those who incline to adopt the act which we are now called upon to pass, seem disposed to commit to the lay and ecclesiastical commissions, who are to be appointed under its authority. He rendered, as far as in him lay, the laws of the land inoperative, and in his conduct justified the assertion, that *Popery and tyranny necessarily exist together; and convinced the nation that its liberties cannot be safe, if a Papist sits upon the throne.* It had before—let this not be forgotten—been convinced that a king must have Protestant advisers only in Parliament.

Advert, then, my lords, to what took place when James abdicated the government, and when William, acting with Protestant advice, became the glorious instrument, as the Bill of Rights expresses it, of delivering this kingdom from Popery and arbitrary power. The House can never look at the transactions of that memorable era, and degrade this great deliverer, and those who acted with him, as settling the liberties of the kingdom, not under the influence of a rational love and attachment to civil and religious freedom, which cannot co-exist with ecclesiastical tyranny, but under the

effect of a panic, created by Titus Oates and his perjuries, and by Popish plots real or imaginary. The King and Parliament solemnly continue the declaration against transubstantiation. They re-enact oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy, and impose upon the subject the duty of swearing that no foreign prince or prelate hath, or ought to have, any authority, ecclesiastical or spiritual, within this realm; and this certainly means what in other statutes is expressed by the words "any manner of authority." And here be it observed, that every member of this House has sworn that a foreign prelate "ought not to have any" authority. But in this act are not we, who have sworn that he ought not to have any authority, proposing to give him all that a Roman Catholic shall think does not conflict or interfere with his allegiance and obedience?

They then established the coronation oath, the object of which they declare to be the maintenance of "all the people in their spiritual and civil rights and properties." They require the King to swear, that he will, to the utmost of his power, maintain the Protestant reformed religion established by law. In the same session they enact the law for exempting the Protestant Dissenters from penalties—the Act of Toleration—"as an effectual means of uniting the Protestant subjects in interest and affection," requiring from them, nevertheless, that they should take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy, and make the declaration against transubstantiation, extending the benefits of toleration to Protestants—not to Roman Catholics—to those whose interests this proposed bill overlooks, and not to those, who, from this proposed bill, are to reap benefits and advantages, which the constitution has hitherto denied to Dissenters. In the succeeding session, they pass the Bill of Rights; stating, that "by the assistance of evil councillors, judges, and ministers" (our Protestant King, it seems, is now to have Roman Catholic councillors, judges and ministers) King James endeavoured to subvert and extirpate, not merely the laws and liberties, but what they ranked in value and estimate as equal to, and necessarily connected with, the laws and liberties of the

kingdom,—the Protestant religion,—by the various (his) acts there enumerated. They declare that the lords spiritual and temporal, being Protestants, and commons, met, “in order to settle such an establishment, as that their religion, laws, and liberties, might not again be in danger of being subverted.” What religion? The Protestant religion assuredly. They express their confidence, my lords, that they shall be protected against all other attempts upon the same religion, laws and liberties. They re-enact oaths of allegiance and supremacy. And, then prefacing the enactment with the memorable declaration, “that it has been found by experience that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this ‘Protestant kingdom’ (a kingdom Protestant with Protestant religion) to be governed by a Popish prince,” they exclude such a prince from the Crown, and absolve the subjects of their allegiance to any such prince. And they require every person, coming to the throne, at his coronation, or coming to Parliament, which shall first happen, to make the declaration against transubstantiation, which, in a former act, they had required the subjects to make, and which they considered the only sure and certain test that a King or a subject was a Protestant. All which are then declared, enacted, and established to be the law of this realm for ever.

True it is, my lords, that Parliament cannot be absolutely bound by such an enactment for all generations:—but, when it is discussing whether such laws as these are to be considered as fundamental and essential, as making the state and the religion of the country fundamentally and essentially Protestant, and the kingdom itself a Protestant kingdom, no man can deny that they are—as far as in the nature of laws they can be—unalterable; i. e. that they are not to be altered without cogent necessity clearly shown, and that it is incumbent upon those who propose the changes now meditated, to make out the necessity of so much alteration in the nature of “an establishment, expressly formed in order that our religion, laws, and liberties, which had been

subverted, might never again be in danger of being subverted."

The act for the further limitation of the Crown, 12 and 13 William III. states that, after the passing of the Bill of Rights, his Majesty's subjects were restored to the full and free possession and enjoyment of their religion, laws, and liberties; and makes further provision for the succession of the Crown in the Protestant line, for the happiness of the nation, and the security of its religion,—requiring every person, who comes to the possession of the Crown, to join in communion with the Church of England, as by law established; and for confirming all the laws for securing the established religion. At the Union with Scotland, both in England and Scotland respectively, it is made an "essential and fundamental" condition of the Union "in all time coming," that the Protestant religion in each shall "be effectually and unalterably secured;" and, with respect to that of England, that all Acts for the establishment of the Church thereof shall remain and be in full force *for ever*.

My Lords.—The House has been told, that in Scotland they do not acknowledge, as we do in England, the supremacy of the King as head of the national church: but it is most material to recollect that they have no intercourse with any foreign prince or prelate, as connected with their religion; that their established religion, the religion of the country—of the great mass of the people—is Protestant; and that Scotland is not, like Ireland, with a nationally religious establishment unalterably Protestant, and a great body of the community Roman Catholics and in constant intercourse with Rome. The established religion of England, and the established religion of Scotland, differing in some respects, though both Protestant, their established churches are perfectly distinct. The Established Church of Ireland, on the other hand, is part and parcel of the one Established Church of England and Ireland; a church affected in both its parts by what affects it in either of its parts; and that part of it which is in Ireland is opposed constantly by a religious

body, to which there is nothing alike, in number or nature, in Scotland, which can enter into controversy with Scotland's Established Church.*

My Lords.—The fifth article of the Act of Union with Ireland unites into “one Protestant Church the churches of

* In the Scotch Act, recited in the 5th Queen Anne, c. 8, (the Act of Union,) entitled “An Act for settling the manner of electing the sixteen Peers and forty-five Members, to represent Scotland in the Parliament of Great Britain;” the Queen, with the advice and consent of the estates of Parliament, ordains the manner in which the sixteen peers shall be named, and in which the forty-five members for the shires and burghs shall be chosen. And it is therein expressly declared, that none shall be capable to elect or to be elected, for any of the said estates, but such as are Protestants, excluding all Papists; and, by the Act of Union, this act is declared as valid as if the same had been one of the articles of Union, ratified and approved by the Act; every clause, matter, and thing in which articles, are, by the Act of Union, for ever ratified, approved, and confirmed.

The Act of the 6th of Queen Anne, for rendering the Union more complete, and providing that there should be only one privy council in Great Britain, made it necessary to make other provisions in the proceedings as to the election of members of the House of Commons, and the sixteen peers; but the acts making such provisions do not appear to alter the provision, that both electors and elected should be Protestants.

And the Act of the 33d George III. which, as to persons professing the Roman Catholic religion in Scotland, substitutes a new form of oath instead of the formula required by King William's statute, does not appear to affect this provision requiring as to Parliament the electors and elected to be Protestants.

The proposed Bill had no clause continuing to confine the right to elect, and to be elected, to Protestants, with respect to the sixteen peers, and forty-five members of the House of Commons for Scotland.

It is then intended to alter the articles of Union with Scotland in this respect, and with regard to one of their most fundamental provisions.

Or, is a special clause to be finally inserted in the Bill, excepting those peers and members, and their electors, from the operation of this Bill, and preserving the aid of the Scotch Protestants, representing Scotland in the two Houses of Parliament, in support of the Protestant succession and government in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, when the doors of both Houses shall be opened, as to England and Ireland, to peers and commoners professing the Roman Catholic religion?

Is it intended that a native of Scotland not a peer, professing the Roman Catholic religion, might be a representative of an English county or city, but that he should not represent a Scotch shire or burgh?

England and Ireland," declares that the doctrine, worship, discipline, and the government of that church, are to remain in full force for ever, as now by law established; that the continuance of it as the Established Church, shall be deemed, and taken to be, an essential and fundamental part of the Union. And if the eighth article can be taken to affect this provision made by the fifth article, it can never be contended, that it can be consistent with the intention of Parliament to enact laws, endangering that part of the United Church which exists in Ireland; and, through this medium, endangering the whole one Protestant Church of the United Kingdom.

My Lords.—Not meaning to infer an intention to endanger the Church from any thing which has been proposed to Parliament since this Union, no man can deny that measures have been proposed, from time to time, which some well-disposed persons and some usually deemed well-judging persons have found it difficult to consider as not endangering the terms of that Union, as to the Established Protestant Church, almost as soon as the Union was made. Let it be observed that acts of Parliament regulate, according to the language of them, the discipline, worship, and government in the Protestant Church. Will his Majesty's subjects, professing the Roman Catholic religion, and, if this Bill passes, summoned to both Houses of Parliament to consult concerning the affairs of the Church, and therefore joining in acts relative to the discipline, worship, and government of the Protestant Church, consent that the Protestant members of these Houses shall so legislate as to the like ecclesiastical matters affecting the Roman Catholic body. If the statutes of 1791 and 1793 do not sufficiently relieve the Roman Catholics of the United Kingdom from pains and penalties, let them be so relieved. That is not the object of this Bill; which is, to give them political power in almost as great a degree, and to as large an extent, as it possibly can be conferred. If there be any thing, not political power, which it may be proposed to enact for them, or any of them, neither is that the object of this Bill.

This Bill does not propose certainly to change the system established at the Revolution, so far as it ordains that the Sovereign shall be Protestant, by positive enactment. It does propose that that system shall be changed by such enactment, so as to admit Roman Catholics to offices of the highest trust, and with the exception of almost none. It certainly is not proposed to discharge the Crown of its sworn duty to maintain the Church of England, as by law established—and, true, and strange it is, that it does not propose to repeal the Test Act and Corporation Act. But, my lords, whether the Bill has not a tendency to weaken the system, which requires the King to be a Protestant—to weaken his power of effectually maintaining the Protestant Church and religion, and the Protestant throne, and to lead unquestionably to the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, is a question of great importance, and the solution of which is matter of no very great difficulty.

My Lords.—Our ancestors thought there was no sufficient security if the Sovereign professed the Roman Catholic religion, though his ministers, councillors, and parliaments were Protestant. Can it rationally be doubted that there is much less security for civil and religious freedom, if the King is Protestant, and his ministers, councillors, Parliament, and judges, are Roman Catholics? The House is told, indeed, that there is ample security, if the Lord Chancellor be Protestant; and it seems to have been thought that the actual security would be found in the fact that the Crown never would actually appoint those whom the Act makes eligible, to those great offices. Those who know the state in which a Protestant Chancellor would stand in a cabinet of Roman Catholic ministers, will readily believe that, if he had either sense or honesty, he neither would remain there, nor be permitted to remain there an hour. And look, my lords, to the effect of rendering the Roman Catholics eligible to high offices, but not appointing them to such offices. This is insult towards them, more intolerable than ineligibility. But what would be the effect with reference to the King? Do the Roman Catholics now complain? Does the present state of

the disqualifying statutes goad and irritate them? Make them eligible to office, and yet withhold office from them, what is this but acting most unworthily towards them? You are also directing their discontent, hitherto pointed at the laws of their country, against the King upon the throne; it being, too, your duty to render him an object of affection, as far as may be, with all his subjects; and, compelling him to continue Protestant, you are engaging, in a great degree, his conscience to deny to the Roman Catholics the benefits you pretend to enable him to confer upon them.

But it may be said, my lords, the King's confidential servants may be partly Protestant, partly Roman Catholic—that such was the case under Queen Elizabeth, and other sovereigns. But what did her experience teach her as to this? And what did the experience of those who came after her teach? That experience led to the change of system which was completed at the Revolution. If the King's confidential servants ought not to be Roman Catholics, it is said, nevertheless, his privy councillors may be chosen from among them; providing only they abstain from advising the Crown as to benefices and offices in the Protestant Church, and that Roman Catholics may safely be admitted into both Houses of Parliament.

My lords,—with respect to the privy councillors, it seems strange that, if their duties are to be changed, if they are to be restrained by this act from advising in the matters specially mentioned, it has not occurred, to alter, by enactment, the privy councillor's oath, when administered to a Roman Catholic. It may be said, that the law which required the oath, will qualify the oath: but it is a little difficult to admit the consistency of my submitting to a law to-day, requiring me to withhold advice on some matters, and to take an oath to-morrow that I will faithfully give my opinion in all matters moved and debated. In the matter of oaths, it is surely satisfactory and necessary to prevent the swearing in terms which are in apparent contradiction, according to their obvious meaning, to what is really intended to be sworn. The Roman Catholic privy councillor is not to advise the

Crown in the disposal of any benefice or office in the Protestant Church; but in how many matters of mighty import to the welfare of the community is he left at liberty to advise—and how many respecting even the welfare of this very church? and of how much more consequence to its welfare than the disposal of a church preferment?

It has been said, my lords, and most reasonably, that if you admit Roman Catholics into Parliament, you ought not to exclude them from the Privy Council: if you admit them into the great council of the nation, that you cannot well exclude them from among the number of those who are to act in inferior councils. In truth, this argument, which points out the extent to which you must go, if you admit Roman Catholics into Parliament, in a country whose government and church are essentially and fundamentally Protestant, furnishes very weighty reasons why you should not admit them into Parliament.

My Lords.—It has been urged, that the repeal of the laws which prohibit Roman Catholics from sitting in either House of Parliament, would, in fact, make little change in the composition of Parliament—that it would not introduce more than six or seven peers into the House of Lords, and very few commoners into the other House of Parliament. And it has also been urged, that after giving the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics in Ireland, you are, almost of necessity, required to render them capable also of sitting in Parliament. With respect to the House of Lords, that reasoning was enforced by the fact, that Roman Catholic peers did sit in this House until the 30th of Charles the Second, and that, being very few in number, if they should now sit in this House, it cannot be very objectionable: and their pretensions to sit here have been strongly recommended in observations, unquestionably most just, upon the excellence of the characters of the modern Roman Catholic peers. In a question of this nature, my lords, the personal merits, however great, of particular individuals must be laid out of consideration—it must be decided upon general principles. If Roman Catholics are unfit advisers of a Protestant king—

in a Protestant state in the House of Commons—unfit there to counsel the king with respect to the worship, discipline, and government of a Protestant Established Church, they cannot be fit advisers to give counsel touching such matters in the other House of the Protestant Parliament. Previous to the Revolution it was, if not from actual danger, upon principle, determined, that persons professing this religion, should sit in neither of the Houses of Parliament.

This exclusion from both, my lords, the Prince of Orange sanctioned, when, as the Bill of Rights states the fact, he addressed his letters only to the Lords Spiritual and Temporal being Protestants. This exclusion King William sanctioned in the several acts which passed during his reign, which committed to the hands of Protestants, or continued in the hands of Protestants, all offices connected with the government of his “Protestant kingdom.” If the government of this kingdom is fundamentally and essentially Protestant,—and Protestant it is, fundamentally and essentially,—it is not, in just reasoning, matter of much consequence, whether the passing of this bill would, or would not, introduce many Roman Catholics into the House of Commons; but it is difficult to assent to what has been stated repeatedly in assertion, that the number introduced would be too small dangerously to influence the decisions of that House. What has been the effect of giving to the Roman Catholics in Ireland the elective franchise? It has operated, as Lord Clare foretold in his able, prophetic, and constitutional speech. It may perhaps be reasonably asserted, that though as yet Roman Catholic representatives have not been sent to Parliament,—such has been the influence of Roman Catholic electors, that to this very act, which gave them the elective franchise, it is owing, that the bill now under discussion has passed the House of Commons. He must have been a very inattentive observer of what passes in Parliament, who has not remarked that a small band or knot of individuals, acting together upon system—constantly acting together and watching for opportunities and movements favourable to their views and projects, may achieve great and important changes.

My Lords.—It must be further recollected, that, if this bill passés, the Test and Corporation Acts must be repealed, and the members of Roman Catholic corporations entitled to send representatives to Parliament would not be likely, if they had an option, to choose Protestant members; and, considering the other means which many Roman Catholics would have of obtaining seats in the Commons' House, the calculation of the number of them that would become members, seems in argument to have been stated much too low.

It is of little consequence that this bill provides that nothing contained in it shall be construed to alter the laws for establishing the uniformity of public prayers, and administration of the sacrament, in the united episcopal Church of England and Ireland. How futile and inefficacious must such an enactment appear to us—when we are enacting by this bill itself what seems to have a tendency to subvert all we have seen to have been declared by Parliament, *essential, fundamental, and to continue for ever!*

My Lords.—This bill excludes from the Ecclesiastical courts of judicature the Roman Catholics; but it seeks to capacitate them to fill all the benches of the temporal courts, and the highest seats of judicature in such courts, with an exception only in the case of the lord chancellor;—an exception, not founded upon duties of his judicial character, but upon the nature of his other duties. Such, however, is the nature of our temporal and ecclesiastical laws—such the connexion between them, that the assertion may be ventured, that this object of the bill, as to this matter, is unattainable; and, indeed, unless misinformation has been given to the public as to what has passed somewhere, the answer which has been given to those who have objected to this provision of the bill has been, that nobody could conceive that Roman Catholics would actually be appointed to the judicial seats in Westminster Hall. To enact by law that you may do what is in fact never intended to be done, does not seem very wise or conciliatory legislation. Suppose it enacted, and Westminster Hall crowded with Roman Catholic judges, and com-

missions of review of the sentences of the Ecclesiastical Courts to issue; to what class of men are they to be addressed in the place of those temporal Protestant judges, who now form so essential a part of the courts constituted by such commissions?

If Roman Catholics are not to be judges, it is said, my lords, that you ought to allow them to have silk gowns, that no policy can justify your prohibitions against their being distinguished by professional rank of this kind. Certainly, as the law stands, they cannot be appointed king's counsel, but there is no law to prevent their having the same rank bestowed in patents of precedence—such a patentee has no office, and takes no oath. Mr. Ponsonby's bill did not affect their situation, because they had not the situation of office.

It appears, then, my lords, from what passed at the Revolution, that our ancestors were satisfied that political power in any department of the state, in the hands of Papists, was inconsistent with the maintenance of a Protestant establishment. Upon the principle that, in a Protestant kingdom, political power should be placed in Protestant hands, the settlement then made was made. Upon this principle, the settlement then made has been continued from generation to generation; and the wisdom of the principle is in itself sufficient to account for the adoption and maintenance of that settlement, without reference to the dread of Popish plots, or apprehensions about Popish pretenders.

My Lords.—With respect to the repeal of the laws relative to the declaration against transubstantiation, the House may be referred to what has been before stated, and to its decision upon a similar project in a former session. This is said to relate solely to matters of spiritual and religious belief, not interfering with allegiance or civil duty. The object of it, however, was to ascertain effectually what persons did hold, or were thought to hold, opinions interfering with allegiance properly understood. This provision was most industriously preserved at and since the Revolution, as a most essential provision of law: not only the subjects, whether members of the Church of England, Protestant

Dissenters, or Quakers, were required, but the Sovereign was required to make this declaration,—the sovereign to make it in the most solemn manner, upon the most solemn occasion;—from that era to this hour, from reign to reign, the declaration has been continued to be required. And the present king (George IV.), upon his first entrance into this House as king, solemnly, on the throne, made this declaration. From all his successors,—from none of his subjects, it seems to be the purpose of this bill hereafter to require it.

Let us now advert, my lords, to the other parts of this bill,—this bill of conciliation,—which, professing to unite and knit together the hearts of *all* his Majesty's subjects, has unfortunately set them all together by the ears, to use a vulgar phrase. It has, however, been said that *you* are to legislate; *others*, satisfied or dissatisfied, are to take the measure. Be it so—but then, if all are dissatisfied, do not insult them by calling this a bill of conciliation!—by telling them that it is a bill knitting together all their hearts in interest, and love, and charity, one towards another,—do not remind them of the fact, that a person, perceiving one man running after another with a cat-of-nine-tails, and being asked what he was about, declared that he only wanted to make a volunteer of the person he was pursuing.

My Lords.—As to all the remaining parts of this bill, the first objection is, that the Protestant sees no sufficient security in its enactments, and, such as that security is, the Roman Catholic is utterly averse to granting it. But the bill is open in these parts of it to many observations. The House must be aware that this bill is composed of what originally appeared in two bills,—the former confined to the concessions, the latter to the securities. In the former bill, his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects were frequently mentioned as such, but no mention was made in that bill of "the Roman Catholic Church within any part of the United Kingdom." The second bill, now forming the latter part of the proposed bill, provides the precautions to be taken in respect of persons in holy orders professing the

Roman Catholic religion, who may, at any time hereafter, be elected, nominated, or appointed to the exercise or discharge of episcopal duties or functions of a dean in the said church, within any part of the United Kingdom;—and the oath speaks of a Roman Catholic bishop or dean in the Roman Catholic Church, in the United Kingdom.

Surely, my lords, the House would expect, if it thinks proper to acknowledge in statutes a Roman Catholic Church as a church in England, that this acknowledgment should have appeared in some other form. Surely the House, before it can pass such a law as this, speaking of bishops and deans in the Roman Catholic Church, as a church acknowledged by English law as existing in England, will expect to be somewhat better informed than it now is, how these bishops and deans are to be elected, nominated, or appointed to the exercise or discharge of their duties and functions. We have often heard of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland,—of its titular bishops of particular places in Ireland,—its titular deans and chapters;—and if this bill passes, you will have two Churches there ready formed,—the Protestant Church, and the Roman Catholic Church, with all its members ready to take their places. Whether the law of Ireland acknowledges the right of these functionaries to assume the titles of archbishops and bishops of Dublin, Armagh, and the other episcopal sees, the House may satisfy itself by inquiry; but is it meant that in England we are to see a similar Roman Catholic hierarchy, with its titular archbishops and bishops of Canterbury, York, London, Durham, &c., its titular deans and chapters, &c.? Can it be possible that the legislature can pass such a bill as this; and that too as a bill of peace and conciliation, without previously settling in some measure, how and in what form the Roman Catholic religion is to be exercised in England? Can it be meant, that in England, you are to introduce all the inconveniences and mischiefs, which are experienced in Ireland by the co-existence of the Protestant hierarchy and the Roman Catholic hierarchy? We do not hear in England of titular archbishops and bishops of places in England. We admit

the episcopal character resides in the Popish bishop; but our law has, at least heretofore, been supposed to prohibit their assuming titles connected with places in England as a misdemeanour. It seems, therefore, to be a great objection to the bill, if you think to give to the Roman Catholics political power, that you make no provision for the peaceable co-existence of the Protestant Church and what is termed the Roman Catholic Church in the United Kingdom, but leave them to jostle against each other as they may.

My Lords.—Look at the bills of 1791, and 1793; see the provisions therein as to the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion,—among others, even as to the form and structure of their places of worship—to preserve the predominancy of the Church of England. Has it been considered whether any similar provisions will be in force after this law passes? Or, are we to have a Roman Catholic cathedral, vying in magnificence with our Protestant Cathedral, for the exercise of the Roman Catholic religion by its archbishops, deans and chapters? Is it meant there shall be this public display of a Roman Catholic Church? A mode of worship, when set up in opposition to the national worship, and when allowed to be exercised in peace, we have been told, “should be exercised with decency, gratitude, and humility.”*

My Lords.—It is unnecessary to trouble the House much as to the enactments relative to the commissioners to be appointed in England and Ireland according to this bill. There has been abundant reason to know, that the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland will not accept, as a boon, those enactments; that they will not submit to that interposition of a veto by Protestant authority, which is conceded by other Roman Catholics to temporal sovereigns. This is not the first time in which this sort of conciliation has been at-

* Is it meant that Roman Catholic judges upon their circuits, robed in their ermine, and surrounded by their attendants, shall, before they proceed to the administration of justice, be conducted in the face of all the country, to Roman Catholic places of worship, as they now are to Protestant Churches.

tempted, and in vain, and probably some in the House know what has passed in Ireland upon this subject, in the course of the last week.

As to that part of the bill, my lords, which relates to bulls, dispensations, and other instruments from the see of Rome; in a country in which the exercise of a dispensing power cost a king his crown, this bill proposes, in some instances, to do what looks as if it authorized some commissioners, in others one commissioner, and that one an ecclesiastical commissioner, professing the Roman Catholic religion, to dispense with the laws against receiving such instruments from Rome. How can it be expected, that the Roman Catholic clergy will admit the inspection of these instruments? We have heard that the present Pope has himself declared, that never, in any intercourse with a Protestant or Roman Catholic power, was the ecclesiastical power so subservient to the lay authorities, as to allow the rescripts or other instruments to be submitted to them. It well behoves the legislature to pause before it will give a legal sanction of any kind to foreign intercourse with Rome, if such are the sentiments of the Roman Catholic clergy and the Pope.

Without meaning to impute, my lords, and disavowing the intention to impute, to the Roman Catholics of this day some of the tenets, which some in former times were said to entertain, their opinions and those of their Church are yet such, as make it seem to be altogether inconsistent in a government, settled as essentially Protestant, with a Protestant Established Church, to grant them political power. The Churches of England and Ireland are now one united Protestant Church,—what endangers the one must endanger the other. If the concessions proposed to be granted by this bill are granted, and without securities, (and what securities that will be given has the wisdom of man yet devised?) is it possible to believe that the Irish Roman Catholics will make this bill of concessions a resting point?

My Lords.—Demand has followed from time to time upon demand, and demand will follow from time to time upon

demand, till nothing more can be asked; for till toleration of the Roman Catholics in Ireland gives way to Roman Catholic establishment, and Protestant establishment shall be succeeded by such a portion of toleration of Protestants as the Roman Catholics may be disposed to allow them, it cannot be rationally expected that the Roman Catholics there will cease their struggles to supplant the Protestant Church, if they do not disturb the settlement of property. In fact, the more sincere the Roman Catholics are in their religious belief, the more strongly must they be impelled to weaken the Protestant Church. The fears of those considerable men, who opposed the grant of the elective franchise in Ireland, were thought to be chimerical; but do they now appear to have been chimerical?

If this Bill should pass, my Lords, the next demand will be to repeal all the securities which it enacts. And, indeed, rumour has told us that there have not been wanting those who have thought it expedient, on the part of the Roman Catholics, to let the bill pass, such as it is, notwithstanding all their objections to it; thereby establishing the concessions, and trusting confidently to the repeal, in another session, of the securities. It is said, that this bill, if passed, would be a bill of peace and conciliation. Is there not abundant reason to believe that it would in truth introduce confusion, and domestic discord, and eternal struggle for power? We know what has been the effect of our present establishment for many generations. What will be the effect of the proposed changes can at best be but matter of uncertain speculation and conjecture. The Lords and Commons were assembled at Westminster, by the Prince of Orange, "in order to settle such an establishment, that our religion, laws, and liberties might not again be in danger of being subverted." Is it possible to maintain that by such a total change of what was then established as is now meditated, they may not again be in danger of being subverted? Let us not disturb the happiness of the great mass of Protestants. Let us not mistake the present peaceable demeanour of the Protestant part of the community, produced by the influence of the con-

fidence with which they hope Parliament will not finally adopt them, for their assent to these measures, or an indifference about them.

My Lords.—The times, it is said, are changed, and the Roman Catholics, it is said, are changed;—be it so; but such change does not affect the soundness of the principles upon which this kingdom has established itself as a “Protestant kingdom,” with the power of the state in Protestant hands, and with a Protestant church establishment, and toleration,—toleration from time to time enlarged to the utmost extent the public welfare will admit; but toleration only,—for those who dissent from it. It may be that the Church of Rome itself has changed some of its tenets. Its Protestant advocates tell us so,—its Roman Catholic defenders deny it. But we are led not to doubt that the present Pope has re-established the order of Jesuits,—that the Inquisition was revived,—we have heard of bulls against Protestant societies distributing the Scriptures. We have heard of transactions respecting bishops in Belgium. We hear of the establishment at Stonyhurst,—we hear of Jesuits there, though we are told the Pope does not consent to their establishment in countries which are not willing to receive them; and we might ask where the person at the head of the Stonyhurst establishment now is, and for what purpose he is where he is said to be?

We have been told, my lords, that in Ireland, where the Roman Catholic hierarchy exists, they have their synods and consistorial courts; and they are misrepresented, if they do not use their excommunications, and their refusals to give the sacrament, for purposes which it would be difficult to consider as of a purely spiritual nature, or to reconcile to the law of the land.

“Persecution for religious opinions,” says Blackstone, “however ridiculous and absurd, is against sound policy and civil freedom. If men quarrel with the ecclesiastical establishment, the civil magistrate has nothing to do with it, unless their tenets or practice are such as threaten disturbance in the state. He is bound, however, to protect the Estab-

blished Church, and if that can be better effected by admitting none but its genuine members to offices of trust, he is certainly at liberty so to do, the disposal of them being matters of discretion."

Men of great name seem to have been influenced by a persuasion, that Popery has necessarily a connexion with civil tyranny. Lord Clare held "canonical obedience to the Pope to be inconsistent with the duties of civil allegiance to a Protestant state." Let the words of Lord Hardwicke be had in remembrance:—"It well deserves," he says, "the serious attention of the whole nation, of what important consequence it is, to preserve not only the name and outward form of the Protestant among us, but the real uniform belief and practice of it. Indifference to all religion prepares man for the external profession of any, and what may that not lead to?" "Give me leave," added he, speaking in the presence of the Lords and Commons, "give me leave to affirm before this great assembly, that, even abstracted from religious considerations, the Protestant religion ought to be held in the highest reverence, as the surest barrier of our civil constitution. Ecclesiastical usurpation seldom fails to end in civil tyranny. The present happy settlement of the Crown is, in truth, and not in name only, the Protestant succession;—and the inviolable preservation of that wise and fundamental law made since the Revolution, whereby every Papist is absolutely excluded from inheriting the Crown, will be a solid security to our posterity against all who shall watch for the destruction of our liberties." (Hear, hear!)

If the cries of "Hear, hear," mean to intimate that noble lords who are near, deem this as Lord Hardwicke's declaration of opinion, that the happy settlement of the Crown, consisted only in excluding a Papist from the throne, and in no manner depended upon the Crown's being surrounded with Protestant councils, and that that exclusion alone, though the Crown should be surrounded in all departments of offices with Roman Catholic advisers (enemies to that Protestant religion, which is here said to be the surest barrier of our civil constitution) would be a solid security for our liberties,

they impute to him a want of judgment, and contradictions in what he declares, altogether inconsistent with his great character. May the posterity of those noble lords find, in the preservation of our present laws,—in those wise and fundamental laws, which require the Throne, the Government, and the Church, to be unalterably and for ever Protestant, that solid security for their liberties, which they can never find in excluding a Papist from the throne, but surrounding a Protestant king with Popish advisers!

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL,
PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY.

—

When the second reading of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill was moved in the House of Lords, May 17, 1825, Lord Colchester having proposed an amendment that “this bill be read this day six months”—and several Peers having delivered their sentiments, the Right Honourable and Noble, the EARL OF LIVERPOOL, Prime Minister of State and First Lord of the Treasury, addressed the House in the following eloquent, energetic, and truly constitutional language.

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MY LORDS.—Late as the hour is, I cannot suffer the speech of the noble Marquis (Lansdown) who has just sat down, to pass without troubling the House, and I fear at some length, with some observations in reply to it. I am ready, for myself, at once to meet the question as a question of expediency—to look fairly at the advantages which are expected from it, and at the evils to which it may give rise. But, my lords, I cannot do this without first calling the attention of your lordships to the situation in which the House stands with respect to the question—a situation which, in my judgment, is equally novel and inconvenient. In consequence of events in Ireland which transpired prior to the assembling of Par-

liament, Parliament has found it necessary to pass an act putting down the body called the Catholic Association, and also to institute an inquiry, by both branches of the legislature, into the state of the sister kingdom generally.

Now, my lords, even if I had been favourable to the concessions of the Roman Catholic claims, I should certainly, under such circumstances, have thought it right to await the result of the inquiry so instituted, and at all events to legislate only upon a full investigation of the subject. No such course, however, it seems, is to be adopted by the promoters of the present measure. The bill is brought in without one moment waiting for intelligence; nor is it the mere bill before the House that is to be brought forward; but two others are devised, got up with equal haste and equal want of consideration; some of the provisions of which may go, perhaps, to alleviate the evils belonging to the main measure, but others there are, which seem to me no less likely to increase it.

Why, then, my lords, it is not one measure of change that is proposed, but three; and what are they—on what is each to depend—and what is their connexion? This course might answer the purpose of the advocates of the Roman Catholics; it might serve—as it is meant to do—to catch a few stray votes on the right or the left; but, in what sort of situation is the House of Lords, I ask, placed by such a proceeding? I desire to know what it is expected the House of Lords shall do. The House of Commons has put us in this condition—it has sent us up a bill which we know not how to act by; having purchased a majority for this bill, by the introduction of other measures. I do protest again, my lords, that I have never known any public body placed in so disgraceful a situation as the Lords are by this conduct of the other House.

Surely, my lords, at least, we ought to know what it is we have to decide upon—whether it is the measure submitted to us alone, or this measure as joined and connected with two others? For myself, as far as my opinion goes, perhaps this question, however, is one of slight consideration; for I

detest, from the bottom of my heart, the bill already in the House. A great part of it I take to be nonsense; some of it is even still worse. The least objectionable part of the bill, as I think, is the concessions which it proposes making to the Roman Catholics; for upon this subject I will be content to put one short question to the House—will your lordships relieve the Roman Catholic from the disabilities under which he labours, or will you not?—and if your lordships reply in the affirmative, then I will engage to draw up a bill for the purpose in half an hour, which shall not be liable to a tenth part of the objections which apply to this now upon the table. In short, my lords, the simple question as to the great measure seems to me to be—will the House, or will it not, remove the Roman Catholic disabilities? And this question—perhaps one of the most important that Parliament has ever been called upon to decide—cannot too soon be treated in such a manner as to place it on a firm and solid basis.

The noble lords opposite maintain, that it is fitting to grant the concessions demanded; because the Roman Catholics of this country and Ireland ought, and are entitled, to enjoy equal civil rights and immunities at all points with their Protestant brethren. Now, my lords, this is the plain proposition of the advocates for emancipation; and I will deal plainly with it. I meet it with a decided negative. I say, my lords, that the Roman Catholics are not entitled to equal rights in a Protestant country, and this opinion I will sustain. Upon some points I have been favourable to the Roman Catholics; I do not know but there are others upon which I may still be so; but, upon the broad principle—that they are entitled to equal rights with their Protestant fellow-subjects—I and their friends are at direct issue. I admit—no man can dream of denying it—that all subjects in a free state are entitled to the enjoyment of equal rights upon equal conditions; but then the qualification of this principle in the case of the Roman Catholics is clear—the Roman Catholics who demand these equal rights, do not afford equal conditions.

My Lords.—The difference is this—it is stated in a moment,—the Protestant gives an entire allegiance to his Sovereign, the Roman Catholic a divided one. The service of the former is complete; that of the latter only qualified; and unless it can be proved to me, that the man who works for half a day is entitled to as much wages as the man who works the whole day, or in other words, that the half is equal to the whole, I cannot admit, that the Roman Catholic, whose allegiance is divided between a spiritual and a temporal master, is entitled to the enjoyment of the same civil rights and privileges as the Protestant, whose allegiance is undivided, and who acknowledges but one ruler.

Thus much I have thought it necessary to premise, my lords, before I enter upon the question of expediency; because, great as may be the arguments drawn from expediency, it is necessary in the first instance, to found those arguments upon the solid and immutable principles of justice; and although I have attended the discussions of this subject for twenty years, I think it can be placed upon no other intelligible footing.

I shall not now, my lords, enter into any theological discussions. I shall confine myself to the power which, notwithstanding all that has been said upon the subject, I maintain the Pope still holds over the great body of the Roman Catholics. I know that it has been the policy of the advocates of the Roman Catholics to maintain that this power is extinct; but I need only to refer to the evidence before your lordships—evidence which must strike with surprise every man who is not acquainted with it—to prove the extraordinary influence which is even at this day exercised by the Pope of Rome.

It is, my lords, incontestably proved, by the evidence of Dr. Doyle, Dr. Ryan and other dignitaries of the Roman Catholic Church, that the presentation to vacant sees in the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland is vested in the Pope at this moment—that he exercises an absolute and uncontrouled power of appointing whom he pleases to vacant bishopricks. He may, perhaps, (the evidence stated) yield occasionally to

the recommendation of others, but the strict right of nomination he reserves to himself. That he has occasionally yielded to the representation of others has been fully proved by the evidence of Dr. Doyle, who stated before your lordship's committee, that James II., his son, and grandson, had, for a succession of years, recommended to the vacant Irish bishopricks, and that the Pope had invariably attended to their recommendations.

If, therefore, my lords, the King of France, or the King of Spain, or any of the members of that bugbear of the noble lords opposite, the Holy Alliance, were now to recommend to the Pope, who can say that he would not listen to their recommendation? Will any one then say, that a people so circumstanced are entitled to a community of civil rights and privileges with the Protestants?

I know, my lords, it has been said, that the progress of education and the march of civilization have wrought wonders among the Roman Catholics; and, looking to the present aspect of the times, it may, perhaps, appear to superficial observers, that little danger is to be apprehended. But I will remind your lordships, that the horizon is often the clearest and most serene when the tempest is nearest. And here I will appeal to history, and ask your lordships, at what period did the Established Church appear to be in a more flourishing condition, than at the Restoration of Charles II.? And yet in twenty years afterwards it was, that the greatest revolution took place in the condition of this Church; and it was next to a miracle that, by the machinations of a Popish prince, it was not overwhelmed in one common ruin with the State and Constitution of this country. This, then, my lords, is a subject which ought not to be passed over. It is not to the Pope, as Pope, that I object; it is to the principle of the existence of such a power as this in the Pope. It is to the doctrines and dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church that I object. My objections are not to the doctrine of transubstantiation or purgatory, but to the power, the temporal, the practical power of its Priesthood over all the relations of private life.

The noble marquis stated, my lords, that the conduct of the Roman Catholic clergy has nothing to do with the practical discussion of this question. I cannot agree with the noble marquis in that opinion; as I think the conduct of the Roman Catholic clergy mainly influences that of the Roman Catholic body; and this necessarily arises from the nature of the relations existing between them.

With respect, my lords, to the duty of confession, for example—it has been asserted by some noble lords, that we, Protestants also recognize the duty of confession—I admit that we do, but mark the difference between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. We do not require the performance of it as an indispensable duty. We do not even invite, much less require its performance; and, although we believe that absolution, or forgiveness of sins, is the result of sincere repentance and reformation of life, we do not, as the Roman Catholics do, insist upon an annual confession, nor maintain that what is called the absolution of the Priest amounts to a sort of white-washing of the sinner. (Hear.)

I have not, however, my lords, done with the evils of this system of confession, as practised by the Roman Catholic. And here I must again request your lordships' attention to the evidence given before your committee. From parts of this evidence it appears that if the person who confesses were to disclose the commission of the most enormous crime, the Priest is bound to secrecy (hear). Neither is the bond of secrecy confined to crimes which have been committed; it extends to those which are intended to be committed, and not only by the person who makes the confession, but by any of his acquaintances. So that if the Priest were to become cognizant of the most atrocious conspiracy—of one, for example, to blow up both Houses of Parliament—and here, I am putting no imaginary case—it would not be in his power to disclose the secret. I will go further and say, my lords, that if the Priest were to meet a person at a place where two roads meet, and if, under the seal of confession, he had been informed that a murderer was waiting for that person at some

distance on the right, he would not be justified in saying to him, "Go to the left, and you will escape the fate which is preparing for you." What description of religion, then, is this, whose professors we are called on to invest with civil rights? Is it too much to say, that they are under the exclusive dominion of their Priests?

I next come, my lords, to the question of education. And here I have no hesitation in saying, that I see insurmountable difficulties which apply to no other class of Dissenters; and the reason is obvious. In the case of other Dissenters, they all acknowledge one common foundation for instruction—the Bible; but, from the indiscriminate use of this sacred book, the Roman Catholic is debarred by his Priest.

I come next, my lords, to a subject of great importance, as connected with the influence of the Priests and the difficulty of reconciling the two religions. I allude to the subject of marriage. The Roman Catholic Priest disallows the validity of marriages which have been contracted within certain degrees of kindred which are not recognized by his church, although they are by the law of the land. Thus, the Priest and the law are at issue: for, while the one acknowledges the validity of the contract, the other tells those by whom it is entered into, that they are living in a state of sin. There are other instances of interference upon this subject, to which I think it necessary now to advert. I have myself known instances in which the Roman Catholic Priest has refused to marry a Roman Catholic gentleman to a Protestant lady, unless he engaged that all his children should be educated as Roman Catholics. I was desirous to know whether this is the case in Ireland, as well as in this country, and the evidence of Dr. Murray has satisfied me that it is so.

How, then, I ask, my lords, can the professors of such opposite systems of faith and practice, be ever united and knit together in the bonds of social harmony? And, if they cannot be so united and knit together, whose fault is it? It is not the fault of the laws—it is not the fault of the Protestants—it is not the fault of England (hear).—It is owing to

themselves, and to the bigoted and intolerant conduct of their clergy, the natural effect of which is, to create disunion and perpetuate distrust. (Hear, hear.)

I repeat, my lords, that it is my wish to look at the question not theologically, but as one of convenience; but a part of this very question of convenience must depend upon the degree of influence exercised by the Roman Catholic priesthood, and on the species of influence which the tenets of the Roman Catholic faith put into their hands. Now, with respect to another part of their Church discipline, I mean excommunication, what a fearful engine is this in the hands of the priest. I know, my lords, I shall be told that it is frequently evaded. I grant that it is, but the very severity of the punishment is that which prevents its execution; at least, in instances where the priest has not the unanimous voice of the congregation with him. But suppose the congregation were unanimous, and the priest bent upon the punishment of some obnoxious delinquent. I do not say this from any wish to impute unworthy motives to the Roman Catholic priesthood generally, or from any supposition that there is in that body any disposition to the abuse of their power. I say, however, that in the hands of the political priest, there can be no more fearful or dangerous engine than this power of excommunication, with all its train of horrors. Is not this proved by the power which it is upon all hands acknowledged that the priest possesses? Do not Protestants and Roman Catholics, however differing on other matters, unite in this, that in the various counties in Ireland, the power of the landlord is nothing to that which the priest possesses in cases of contested elections, and upon other occasions, when he wishes to make his political influence available.

My peculiar objection to the Roman Catholic religion is, my lords, that it penetrates into every domestic scene, and inculcates a system of tyranny never before known. Now, what are the evils which we have to apprehend! I may in fairness require the supporters of this measure to prove, before we allow this alteration, that there will be no evil

attending it. I will not ask so much from them. I only require them to show me the benefit of conceding.

If all the evils which I have pointed out are really to be expected, then the advantages promised by the noble lord, are out of the question. I hold—your lordships hold—the bill holds, that a Protestant succession is the foundation of our constitutional system. I will say, my lords, that if this measure should pass, the Protestant succession will not be worth one farthing. Much has been said of rights—inde-feasible and natural rights. The state is essentially Protestant, the crown is to be Protestant, and the successors to the throne must take to the same faith. But, are they to be the only persons so limited? I will speak of a king's rights here, my lords, in the same sense, and in no other, as that in which I would argue the rights of a peasant. Is it not hard upon the King and the heir to the throne, that they must be bound to the Protestant faith, while the chief justice, the ministers, and the secretaries of state, may be Roman Catholics? Why is this? Where is the danger in having a popish or a papist chancellor, if all the other executive officers may acknowledge the Pope; I think there is less danger in a popish chancellor, who may be removed at pleasure, than in a popish chief justice, who will hold the administration of the criminal law in his controul, and can only be removed by a peculiar process of law in case of his dereliction.

It is said, my lords, that the privy council may be increased by the admission of Roman Catholics and that it is unjust and cruel to exclude Roman Catholics from such an appointment of trust and honour; in short, that a Roman Catholic might be prime minister, and have the whole patronage of the Church and State at his disposal. As long, however, as the system of the constitution is Protestant, it is essential to maintain a Protestant throne and a Protestant administration of public affairs.

My Lords.—The House ought at once to meet this bill fully and unequivocally, and not to deceive the people. They ought at once to declare, that if the bill were to pass, Great Britain will be no longer a Protestant state. The

evil, I apprehend from the passing of such a bill, will not be immediate; but it will be inevitable, and will come upon the country in a manner little expected.

It is not the immediate object of the Roman Catholics to possess themselves of the property of the Established Church. They are too wary to proceed openly and directly in any such design. No: their object is, in the first instance, merely to diminish the property of the Church. What is the language held, my lords, by one of their great authorities, Dr. Doyle, upon this very point? That he did wish to decrease the magnitude of the possessions of the church; but he wished it, not as a priest, but as an Irishman. Is any man so blind—is any man so deaf—is any man so lost to all the benefits of experience, as not to know what such language really means? Is any man so thoroughly ignorant of the course of human actions, as not to know, that when once the property of the Church is violated under any such a pretence, it will soon be seized upon, and that such is the real object of Roman Catholic cupidity? The most insidious way in which the Roman Catholics can possibly set about their work is to say, “Take the property of the Established Church and give it to the public for the general benefit of the country.” For when once the property of the Protestant hierarchy is invaded and impaired by such an artful attack, it requires but little wisdom to foretell what will befall the remainder of its rights and possessions.

The grand maxim of the Roman Catholics is, my lords: “If one Church sinks, the other must swim; destroy or depress the Protestant Establishment, and that of the Roman Catholics will flourish.” There is nothing inconsistent in the evidence before the House; for the Roman Catholics think, that if they can destroy the Church by what they call legislative means, it is no destruction in the sense of their professions. To destroy this church is in fact, their grand object. It is their duty, their religion, their oath, their everything to effect its downfall. Circumstances might or might not favour their designs; but if the object be effected, what does it signify whether the mischief is produced by

open attacks, or by the more insidious method of impairing the church property?

Noble lords seem to view this measure solely as a means of communicating to the Roman Catholics all the enjoyments of government patronage and employments, and of knitting together all his Majesty's faithful subjects into one nation, to the utter oblivion of all former dissensions and discord; but I have already shown, my lords, that the difficulty of obtaining any such object arises out of the very spirit of their church. Noble lords really appear to think, that, by education, and by removing the disabilities which are laid on the Roman Catholics, all dissensions between the two churches will cease; but, the question is, whether the effect of this bill will not be to increase those dissensions? The bill will leave the two contending parties where they now are; but, by giving new powers to the Roman Catholics, or at least new capabilities of enjoying power, it will bring them more into contact with their Protestant fellow-subjects, place them on a nearer footing of equality, and by thus exciting desires which cannot perhaps be gratified, fresh occasions will arise of dissension and dissatisfaction. If it were possible to unite the Roman Catholics and Protestants in one friendly mass, by any common system of education, I should applaud the effort to obtain so desirable a result; but, separated as we now are, and actuated by the spirit by which it is well known that so many on both sides are actuated, such a project is absolutely impossible. The very hope is visionary; and those who have the object at heart, and have introduced the present measures as a means of effecting this object, will find themselves entirely disappointed, and most egregiously deceived, if we have to carry it into a law.

What, then, my lords, is the good which can result from this bill? Will it tranquillize, or will it tend to tranquillize Ireland? I am sorry that so much delusion exists throughout the country upon a point so important. Great mistakes have arisen from the belief entertained by many members of both Houses, that because Ireland has been in a very disturbed state, and because very objectionable measures have

been resorted to for keeping that country in peace, that therefore all the disturbances have grown out of the Roman Catholic disqualifications. It has been, therefore, the general, or at least a very common, impression, that, if the disabilities be removed, the foundations of peace will be at once established.

But, my lords, it is a proposition of the clearest demonstration, that the disturbed state of Ireland for the last twenty years, has had nothing whatever to do with the Roman Catholic question. This point is most satisfactorily proved by the evidence lying on your lordships' table. For the space of twenty-five years the Insurrection Act has never been once put in force in any part of the province of Ulster; and yet this province is the great seat of religious animosities, and of religious violence, the two parties being there so nearly upon an equality. The Insurrection Act, on the contrary, has been carried into effect in the south of Ireland, where no religious dissensions have existed, or, at least, to the extent of disturbing the public peace. Absenteeism, combined with the great subdivision of property, have occasioned an increase of population to a most enormous extent; this has brought the country into a state of beggary, and hence have sprung all the disorders of the state. This great evil, I am happy to say, is now correcting itself. Dr. Doyle states in his letters, that the population of Ireland is now positively decreasing.

My Lords.—I perfectly agree with the right reverend prelate (the Bishop of Chester) who spoke in the course of the debate, that, whether the Roman Catholics amount to one, two, or three millions made no difference, or ought to make no difference, in the decision of this question. It is a great question that ought not to be decided otherwise than upon general principles, and upon extended views. But, with respect to the number of Roman Catholic subjects, the greatest exaggeration has, I am convinced, been resorted to. A noble duke has this night stated the Roman Catholics of Ireland to outnumber the Protestants in the proportion of five to one. This, my lords, I have good reason for believing,

is an exaggeration. At the very utmost, I do not believe they are more than in the proportion of three to one; and the returns prove, that they are as nearly as possible in the same ratio to each other as in the time of Sir William Petty, with a corresponding increase in both.

Your lordships are told upon all occasions when this question is debated, that the Roman Catholic subjects of foreign states enjoy many advantages which are not enjoyed by the Roman Catholic subjects of the English Crown. I beg your lordships to consider that there are circumstances in the English Constitution, growing out of the very advantages of this constitution, which may make restrictions upon the Roman Catholics more necessary than in absolute monarchies. Noble lords opposite argue, as if the Roman Catholics in this country were deprived of all share in the advantages of our free constitution. But, even after excluding them from all which this bill asks, they will still enjoy more civil and political liberty than the Protestants residing in any Roman Catholic state in Europe. Whatever may be the case in other nations, or in a country circumstanced like Maryland, all I will say is, that it is not in the constitution of this country to admit Roman Catholics to those situations to which the bill will render them eligible. There is therefore, no parity of argument between the two countries. The religious freedom desirable and proper in the one, may be far from desirable or proper in the other.

There is one very material point, my lords, upon which I must offer a few observations. In the House of Commons, a resolution has been come to, on the 29th of April, "That it is expedient that provision should be made by law for the maintenance of the secular clergy of the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland;" not, be it observed, in the way of a regium donum, but a provision by law. Now, my lords, what is this but to establish, to all intents and purposes the Roman Catholic hierarchy in its full pride and power? This is going at once to the very object of Roman Catholic triumph. Why, those who have been the most alarmed, and have thought that such a state of things would grow out

of the present bill, have never imagined that it would have been done so openly. Is such a measure constitutional? Is it consistent with the rights and privileges of Protestants?

The Roman Catholic Church in Ireland, my lords, professes to be a national, and not a missionary church. The bishoprics and parishes are the same, or nearly so, as the bishoprics and parishes of the Established Church. The Roman Catholic bishops claim a parity of spiritual jurisdiction with the bishops of the Establishment. It is for Parliament, therefore, to consider, whether the King can consent to establish by law such a church as that now claiming to exist in Ireland, under the designation of the Irish Roman Catholic Church, consistently with the obligation—"to preserve unto the bishops and clergy of this realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain unto them, or any of them."

I have argued the question upon a narrow principle, my lords, in order to convince your lordships, that the present bill is totally incompatible with the first principles of the constitution; that it would produce the most serious evils throughout the country; and that it would fail to achieve any of those objects which its promoters flatter themselves it will produce. Neither can I bring myself to view it as a measure of peace and conciliation. Whatever it may do in this respect in the first instance, I am persuaded that its natural tendency will be to increase dissensions, and to create discord, even where discord did not previously exist.

I entreat your lordships to consider the aspect of the times in which we live. It is our fate to hear doctrines openly promulgated, which are as novel as they are mischievous. The people are now taught in publications to consider Queen Mary as having been a wise and virtuous Queen, and that the world has gained nothing whatever by the Reformation. Nay, more than this—it is now promulgated, that James II. was a wise and virtuous prince, and that he fell in the glorious cause of religious toleration. Can the House be aware of these facts, and not see that a great and power-

ful engine is at work to effect the object of re-establishing the Roman Catholic religion throughout these kingdoms? And if once established, shall we not revert to a state of ignorance, with all its barbarous and direful consequences?

My Lords.—Let the House consider what has been the result of these laws—what have been the effects of that fundamental principle of the British Constitution—which we are now called upon to alter with an unsparing hand. For the last hundred and thirty years, the country has enjoyed a state of religious peace, a blessing that has arisen out of the wisdom of our laws. But, what had been the state of the country for the hundred and thirty years immediately preceding that period? England had been in a state of the most sanguinary religious contentions. The blessings of the latter period are to be attributed solely to the nature of those laws, which grant toleration to all religious creeds, at the same time that they maintain a just, a reasonable, and a moderate superiority in favour of the Established Church.

Your lordships are now called upon to put Protestants and Roman Catholics upon the same footing; and if we consent to do this, certain I am, that the consequence will be religious dissension, and not religious peace. The present system has the experience of its good results to recommend it, and I prefer it, therefore, my lords, to the experiment proposed in the present bill, or to any other that I have heard yet suggested.

The Bill was rejected by a majority of 48.

SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WESTMORELAND,

LATE LORD LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND.

The Roman Catholic Petition having been presented in the House of Lords, May 13th, 1805, the Right Honourable and Noble the EARL of WESTMORELAND, late Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and at present Lord Privy Seal, addressed their Lordships in the following nervous, eloquent, and constitutional language.

MY LORDS.—Having been one of his Majesty's servants at the time the Union was framed, having been in some degree alluded to in the course of the debate, and the importance of the measure, will be my excuse, however ably the subject has been debated, for stating the grounds of the vote I shall give this night. Having, whilst I had the honour of serving his Majesty in Ireland, twice given his Majesty's sanction to important favours to the Roman Catholics of that kingdom; having been twice thanked by that body, and assured that the period of my administration would ever be remembered with gratitude by the Roman Catholics of Ireland, I trust, in giving my decided negative to the motion of the noble lord for a committee, it is unnecessary for me to relieve myself of any suspicions of being actuated by superstition or bigotry, or a want of principles of liberality and toleration. To toleration in the exercise of his religion and enjoyment of property, every subject, except under imminent circumstances, has a right; beyond this the exercise of political power is a question not of right, but of expediency; a right which every state has exercised, which every state will exercise, in defiance of all the new theories of the rights of man, and the bleeding example of the French Republic.

Before I enter into the discussion of this question, my lords, I will preface two observations: first, notwithstanding the new opinions, that in this country the ecclesiastical establishment is inseparably connected with the state; with it

the country has grown to greatness, and whatever has a tendency to weaken or destroy the establishment of the Church, tends to the destruction of our monarchy, our liberty and our political existence: secondly, that all the examples that have been produced of persons of different religions being allowed to serve the state in other countries, in no degree apply to this kingdom, as those countries are subject to arbitrary government; and, I will venture to say, that no instance can be shown of a free state, with a free parliament, in which persons professing a faith distinct from that establishment have obtained much weight and consequence.

In discussing this question, my lords, it should be considered what is asked, how what is asked is to be obtained, and what is to be substituted in the place of that you take away. What is asked, is Roman Catholic Emancipation,—a term unfitting for this question, and for this assembly. Emancipate the Roman Catholics! Do they require the prætor's wand to be released from servitude, to hold property, to be protected in their persons and property? They are as free as any subjects in the world. Do you talk of emancipating copy-holders, custom-house officers, excise officers? The term, as it was first intended, applies to emancipate Ireland, that is, to separate Ireland from the government of, and connexion with England. But what is asked? To abolish all distinctions between Protestant and Papist, to place the Papist on an equality with the Protestant; whilst any distinction remains, however high or special, the grievance remains. This is as it is asked, as it has been argued.

For this purpose, my lords, you cannot move a step without the repeal of the Test and Corporation acts. In the opinion of many, and to the extent to which the arguments lead, you must also repeal the Act of Supremacy and Uniformity, the Bill of Rights, the Act of Settlement, the Act of Union with Scotland, and alter the King's Coronation Oath. There perhaps will arise a question between original compact and the supremacy of Parliament. Unquestionably,

our laws are not like those of the Medes and Persians, that alter not; unquestionably no Parliament has greater power than the succeeding one; but to this only I argue this question, that, considering the solemnity attendant upon these laws, it is most unwise to raise doubts, and agitate the minds of men upon points which even, in the opinion of many, strike at the settlement of and right to the crown itself with urgent and pressing necessity, without being convinced, first, that you will do no harm; next, that you will do essential benefit; and, lastly, that you have a plan to establish, for that you mean to take away.

Now, my lords, what are the reasons assigned for this measure?—that it will tend to the settlement and tranquillity of Ireland. Serious as I consider many other parts of the subject, if I thought it would have that effect, I would enter into a consideration of it: but it is because I am of a diametrically opposite opinion; because I am convinced that, at this period, it would plunge that country into confusion, I am decidedly against it. I should be glad to ask, my lords, if it be likely to tend towards the tranquillity of a country composed of two descriptions of inhabitants, the one possessed of the property and magistracy, few in number, contending and protecting themselves against the more numerous class, to open every situation as a scene of contest? I consider the first operation of this measure to be, to make this country a scene of confusion, corruption, and riot, not only for Parliament, but for magistracy and situation in all the towns, as described by Lucan—

“*Lethe lisque ambitus urbis*

Annua venali referens certamina campo.”

The Priest, at the head of his flock, leading them to every outrage, and religious bigotry carried to the utmost extent. The power of the Protestant landlords would have no effect against a religious combination.

Next, my lords, what are the causes of the discontents in Ireland? high rents, heavy taxes, tithes, the property possessed by persons speaking a different language, of different manners and habits from the peasantry, a double clergy, the

Protestant clergy in affluence, the Roman Catholic in poverty. May I ask, my lords, which of the grievances will this act touch? Will it lower the rents or taxes? Will it alter the state of property? Will it teach the landlords Irish, or the peasants English? Will it lower tithes? Will it make the Protestant clergy low, and raise the Roman Catholic priest? Perhaps it may, and here is the difficulty. If it operates lightly and gently, as possibly it may, it would not affect the mass of the country; if it operates to affect the mass, it may operate to an extent that may prove fatal to the British connexion.

I have long entertained an opinion, my lords, that the discontents of Ireland have arisen from other causes, and not from religious disabilities. Let us examine history: I shall not go into the discarded code, except to ask if so much was said upon it for the sake of tranquillity? First, I look to the year 1782; then all the grievances of the nation were brought forward by the patriots of that period, various—simple repeal, independent Parliament, free trade; not a word of religious grievances. I proceed to 1789; grievances enough, wrongs enough of a noble marquis, wrongs that never will be forgiven by those who wished to risk the separation of the countries for the sake of party, nor forgotten by those who know that, by his ability and firmness, he preserved that kingdom to his sovereign, and the connexion between the countries. The parties in Parliament, and the Whig Club, stating all the grievances; not a word of religious grievances. Is it to be believed, that the great patriots of the day should not have mentioned religious grievances, if any such oppressed the people? I proceed further, to the year 1791; relaxation was given to the Roman Catholics in England; the Irish Roman Catholics naturally applied; what happened? The Irish House of Commons would not grant the claims. No: they threw the petition off the table, twenty-three only objecting. Now, I argue not the right or the wrong on this subject; but this I contend, that the great patriots of that time would not have rejected these petitions if the state of the laws had been an oppression to the country.

When, then, my lords, was the discovery made? Why, as soon as it was discovered that the government of England wished to do every thing that was proper for the Roman Catholics, then the grievance was made out, then the patriots began to cry out; and whatever was given, the determination was to ask for more, so the more we give, the more we shall be asked, till your lordships have nothing more to surrender. May it be asked, what has been the effect of the concessions of 1793? The Roman Catholics were relieved from every law affecting the mass of the people. The profession of the law was opened, the magistracy, right of voting, freedom of corporations, trade, &c. What happened immediately? Universal insurrection, devastation, and cruelty. May I venture to ask, then, if it is probable that those who returned treason for kindness, and murder for favour, upon points that directly affected them, are likely to become mild and grateful subjects for favours that affect them only distantly and collaterally? Upon this point of the argument I beg to be distinctly understood. I do not bring this argument against the measure; if it be right with a view to the Roman Catholics of Ireland, let it be done; if it is right with a view to the Roman Catholics of England, if it is right upon general policy, let it be done; but, let no man's mind be influenced, in deciding upon this question, by the opinion that concessions of this nature are likely to tranquillize Ireland.

We are told, my lords, it arises out of the Union: how? Was it promised? Certainly not. Did the Roman Catholics carry the Union? Certainly not. Was the question tried at the Union? Why, it was previously rejected by both Parliaments, before the Union, and at the time of the Union itself. It was a strange sort of expectation that what both Parliaments rejected before, and at the Union, should be done as soon as they were united. But, my lords, is it not well known that the measure could not have been carried if this proposition had been clogged to it? Is it not well known that the most zealous friends of that measure would have opposed the Union if this had made a part, considering

it as leading to the separation of the countries? "But it will please the people of Ireland." Are you to learn that there are two descriptions of persons in that kingdom? Will it please the Protestants of Ireland; those who carried that great measure, those who preserved that country to this? It seems as if noble lords had forgotten such people existed; I have not heard mention of them from any one of them; a people, by whose loyalty and courage, in a situation unparalleled, that kingdom was secured; whose conduct was never equalled by any description of men in any country. Why, then, what must be done? I say, "let the Union alone," let that great measure alone, let it work, as it has begun, the settlement of that country, and let not the operations of that great measure be impeded by bringing the Roman Catholics forward at an unfit season, to be made the tool and sport of British faction.

In considering the petition, my lords, several observations might be made, but I shall confine myself merely to two; the first is, an insinuation that the Roman Catholics have not the benefit of equal justice. Now, for one, I beg leave to observe on the unfairness of this insinuation, and to defy any man to show that equal justice in that country is not done to every man, of whatever religion or description he may be. Secondly, that the petition is signed by no Priest. From this three observations may be made; first, that the Priests disapprove of the tenets and declarations contained in the petition, and do not choose to give it their countenance. Secondly, the one which surprised me, and which the noble lord seemed to countenance, that, as its requests do not affect their order, they did not choose to sign it; that it does not go far enough, and therefore did not deserve their approbation. To neither of these observations shall I give any weight, but I will give one more fitting the conduct and character of that reverend body. The reason that I conceive why the Priests did not sign the petition is, that they disapproved of the season; that they who knew the state and temper of their own people, the state and temper of the Protestants, knew that this time is unfitting for the discus-

sion; that neither party had forgiven the sufferings and injuries of the late rebellion, and that to revive the consideration of this question, would only be to revive the horrors of the rebellion. They, therefore, in which I concur with them, wished to postpone the consideration of their situation to a more favourable moment; and when, as was ably observed, so very few persons have signed this petition from several parts of Ireland, it may be argued that a large portion of the Roman Catholics concur in this opinion with the priesthood.

Having looked at this question, my lords, as it relates to Ireland, let us extend our views to its general effect. What is the state of England, of Scotland? Perfectly quiet; no religious jealousy, every man worshipping the Deity according to the form he approves. Will the noble lord insure the continuance of such a state, if this motion be complied with? And here an observation should be made; the Irish Parliaments, taunted as they have been as bigots and oppressors, in 1793 gave considerable privileges to the Roman Catholics; have the English done so to their Roman Catholics, whose loyalty and good conduct have been unimpeached, and against whom suspicion never broached a whisper in their disfavour? The argument of the dangers attending the measures in Ireland, not applying in England, why do not the noble lords propose relaxations to the same extent? Because the state and temper of the country would not bear the proposition. What is the case of Scotland? Why even the laws of 1791, were not extended to that country. What is to be argued from this? That those who had the management of Scotland knew the state and temper of that country would not bear the discussion; that it would be injurious to the Roman Catholics, injurious to the Protestants.

May I then ask, my lords, what has happened to induce you to throw this measure wild upon the country? Does any man wish to renew the horrors of the year 1780? Is any man sure that the cry may not be raised that the Church

is in danger, and may not there be some ground for this alarm? It was very ably shown, and I shall not again go over the ground, that this question may throw the one hundred Irish members, and the whole power of Ireland, into the hands of the Roman Catholics. Calculate what the Dissenters of this country are; add to these, those of no religion, those willing to sacrifice the Establishment to free themselves from tithes and taxes; consider the tempting state of the possessions of the Church, as a source of taxation; contemplate the effects of an union of these bodies acting systematically, forming subscriptions; recollect that parties may be in this country who would go all lengths to attain and maintain power, and nobody can calmly say very serious attacks might not be made on the Establishment of the Church.

We are told, my lords, this is not a time to exclude men from the service of the state for religious opinions. In the first place, in Ireland the Roman Catholics are not generally excluded; and secondly, it is not on account of religious opinions, but because they will not acknowledge the supremacy of the King, and come, in a general way of considering the subject, within the provisions of the 24th of Henry the Eighth. We are likewise told, that the fears of the Pope and Pretender are gone by; of the latter certainly, except by arguments there seem some attempts to set up his title. But the Pope has no power; it is not the power of the Pope, my lords, but the power of those over whom the Pope has influence, that is to be considered; and if that unfortunate person, having disgraced his reverend hand by anointing an usurper, is a prisoner in his capital, and under his authority has a communication with Ireland, and spiritual mixed with civil authority appointing the hierarchy of the country, who can deny this is a solecism in politics, and cannot be contemplated without apprehension.

But, my lords, what I most disapprove, is the manner in which this question is brought forward. Whoever proposes a change of so important a nature as this is, whoever proposes to alter laws, ought to explain the whole plan, and the

whole project. It was said that in the consideration of restrictive laws, all that excluded persons from equal power, the *onus* lay upon those to show cause who wished for their continuance. Is it so? I know not how the people of England will like to hear that they are to show cause for the protection of the corporations and their franchises against universal suffrage of freeholders against copyholders, but for one, I am ready to take the *onus*. "What have you gained by the war?" was frequently asked. What was the noble lord's answer, "that I have survived the shock under which other nations have sunk,"—*quod spero tuum est*.

I listened, my lords, with considerable attention to hear what was to be proposed. The first noble lord was all general, and seemed to profess only a compliance with the petition in aid of this favoured sect, forgetting all others upon equal claims, though his argument went to the full extent to them; but no guard, no declaration of what was to be put in the place. I attended with great anxiety to the next, in the blue ribbon, fully convinced by his mature judgment and discretion, that he had some distinct plan to produce, which, whilst it gave liberty in one instance, would set up some substitute and guard on the other. Not a word. As to the third noble lord, from the extent of his arguments, I heard at least nothing in favour of any religious establishment. We ought, my lords, to see the whole plan, and the whole project, that we may be sure, when we come into this committee, any two of the proposers may agree upon what they would wish to have done. I shall be glad to see this new work of Vauban, and to know if I cannot proceed against it by sap or storm with more prospect of success than against this ancient castle, which has been fortified at every point where danger has threatened.

We have been told, my lords, that this proposal is to strengthen the Church Establishment, to produce the tranquillity of Ireland, and secure the settlement of the Union; but I must not look at the professions of the proposer, but at the tendency of the project; and as I am convinced that its discussion at this improper and unfitting period will, instead

of strengthening, shake the Establishment of the Church; instead of tranquillizing, will convulse the kingdom of Ireland, and instead of cementing the Union, will risk the separation, I must beg the noble lords not at such a moment to hazard the horrors and the miseries of religious contests.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL BATHURST,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIAL DEPARTMENT.

When the Earl of Donoughmore moved in the House of Lords, May 16th, 1817, "that this House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider the petitions of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects," the Right Honourable EARL BATHURST, Secretary of State for the Colonial Department, addressed their Lordships in the following concise, but eloquent, and nervous strain.

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MY LORDS.—I am at a loss to conceive why we should go into a committee on this subject, without having in the first instance settled certain principles on which we are to proceed. What advantages can be derived from a discussion in a committee, which cannot equally be obtained from a debate in the House? My objection to the present motion, as on former occasions, is that no specific measures are proposed, by the supporters of the Roman Catholic claims. They merely ask for a committee, in order to try whether this system or that system, may not be adopted with benefit. If your lordships should agree to the motion, what will be the consequence? The committee will be reluctant to separate without doing something; because, when expectations are so powerfully excited, it is not pleasant wholly to disappoint them; and, they will therefore be in danger of being shamed into a concurrence with some proposition, which, if dis-

tinctly described beforehand, they would not hesitate to reject. No practical good can arise from such a proceeding.

My Lords.—I will not go at length into all the topics which must necessarily be embraced in the consideration of the present question. They have so frequently been discussed, that it would be quite unnecessary to do so. With regard to the *Veto* however, I will observe, that it was originally proposed by the supporters of the Roman Catholic claims. Why? Unquestionably because there was some danger to be apprehended, from which the veto was to protect the Protestant interest. The veto, however, has since been withdrawn by those who proposed it; but in doing so, they have not stated that, in their opinion, the dangers which originally required the veto are diminished. Now, domestic nomination is the proposed security,—but, what reason is there to believe, that this will not be as suddenly, and as capriciously, withdrawn as the other?

An allusion, my lords, has been made to Scotland, which, it is said, has been permitted to enjoy its Establishment, while a similar favour has been denied to Ireland. But independently of the consideration that the privilege was secured to Scotland by one of the articles of the Union, I will say that a similar concession cannot be made to Ireland; because, the religion of the great majority of the inhabitants of Ireland is Roman Catholic. It is impossible to deal with that religion in the same manner as we may deal with any sect of Protestant dissenters. The Roman Catholic religion is, in its nature, hostile to the doctrines and practices of the Reformed Church—that Church which is the key-stone that binds the arch of our Protestant institutions, and gives to them the whole of their solidity and strength.

Admitting, however, my lords, that there was nothing in the Roman Catholic religion to prevent the legislature from treating it differently from the sects of dissenters from the Church of England, it has been asked, whether it is not fit and proper to grant the Roman Catholics certain concessions, and thereby put an end to that bond of union, which now distinguishes them, in hostility against the Protestants?

But, my lords, if the Roman Catholics entertain ulterior designs, injurious to the safety of the state and the Protestant Establishment, the bond of union will still exist, and the addition of power which it is proposed to give, will but render it more formidable. If further concessions could safely be made, and if it were likely to establish harmony and tranquillity, I, for one, my lords, would not oppose it; but the experience of former concessions does not warrant such a presumption, nor am I willing to endanger the safety of the constitution, for a distant and doubtful advantage.

My noble friend has asked, if we can stand where we are—to this I answer, YES;—I think I can stand, because I have stood, and I do not choose to go from the spot where I can and do stand, until you can prove to me that the spot to which you recommend me to move, is quite as good as that which you ask me to leave. But I confess that I think, if my noble friend could prove that we cannot stand where we are, he would prove too much. If the concessions to the Roman Catholics are so dovetailed into one another, that they must go together—that we must either repeal the part, or go on further, I again ask, when and where are we to stop? We must proceed upon a principle of wide and unlimited toleration indeed. Are your lordships prepared to place the Roman Catholics of Ireland on a better footing than the Protestant dissenters in this country? Are you willing—have you made your minds up to the repeal of the Test Acts? Without going that length, all the rest will amount to little or nothing. If you are not disposed to do all this, my lords, allow me to recommend to you to pause before you move at all.

These are the grounds, my lords, on which I feel it my duty to resist the present application. I am not prepared, by my vote this night, to give notice to quit my present tenement, until I am sure of having another house over my head. I am not prepared, and I trust few of your lordships are prepared, for this fundamental change; lest it should shake the foundations of the Establishment in Church and State. I am disposed to look with gratitude to the Re-

formation,—I do not mean to the licentious reign in which that blessing originated, but to the mild and solid virtues of the succeeding monarch, and to the efforts of those erudite and distinguished men who were patronized by him, and who, happily for these highly favoured realms, placed our Church on a rock, from which I hope in God it may never be displaced.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD COLCHESTER.

When the Duke of Portland moved “the second reading of the Roman Catholic Peers’ Bill,” in the House of Lords, June 21st, 1822, the Right Honourable LORD COLCHESTER, formerly Chief Secretary for Ireland, and late Speaker of the House of Commons, rose, and addressed the House in the following eloquent and constitutional language.

MY LORDS.—Differing entirely from the noble duke upon the important measure which he has brought under our consideration, I am desirous of stating briefly to your lordships, the grounds upon which I must endeavour to arrest its future progress. If, indeed, this day were set apart for declaring the sense of Parliament upon the high and distinguished character of the Roman Catholic Peers of the United Kingdom, the illustrious exploits of their ancestors, or their own personal merits, I beg leave to assure your lordships, with the most perfect sincerity, that there is no man living would concur more cheerfully or zealously than myself, in the expression or recognition of every sentiment which could redound to their praise and honour.

But, my lords, it is impossible for me, upon any such considerations, to concur in this bill, which, by express enactment, or direct consequence, delivers to his Majesty’s Roman Catholic subjects at large, the keys of both Houses of

Parliament; a measure studiously framed for obtaining immediately and separately, the concession of a general principle in aid of the Roman Catholic claims, which concession may be afterwards brought to account, and turned to advantage, upon our future discussions; and this measure is represented to us now, as the mere repeal of certain laws of exclusion, as if they had resulted only from the crisis of an unfounded and popular panic.

This exclusion, however, my lords, if examined historically, will be found to have originated in the general spirit of our legislation, established long antecedent to that period, commencing from the laws passed in the reign of Elizabeth,* against all Roman Catholic recusants indiscriminately, and continuing down to the period of the Test Act, and the growing practice of the House of Commons, to remove its own Roman Catholic members;† no Roman Catholic then sitting in either House of Parliament, but by sufferance. The exclusion then established by the act of Charles II.‡ was afterwards substantially recognized and adopted at the Revolution, by the Prince of Orange's declaration from the Hague,§ requiring that Roman Catholics should be shut out from both Houses of Parliament, by the summons of a Protestant Parliament, and by the Bill of Rights|| enacted for the safety of this "Protestant kingdom" with a Protestant King. The like exclusion was formerly and specifically enacted as to Scotland, and incorporated in the very Act of Union,¶ which requires, that the representative peers and commoners, and their electors also, should all be Protestant. And this exclusion, after the interval of three reigns from that of Charles II. was again deliberately confirmed, and applied to the whole of Great Britain, in the first year of the

* Stat. Eliz. 23, 29, 35.

† Strickland's and Swale's Cases. Com. Jour. ix. 393, 501.

‡ 30 Charles II. st. 2.

§ In M. Fazel's Letter to Mr. Stuart, 1687.

|| 1 W. and M. sess. 2. c. 1.

¶ St. 5 Anne, c. 8.

accession of the House of Hanover*, and again in the reign of George II. † the last of these statutes confirming all the former securities by express words, and declaring them to be in as full force as if every clause and provision of the former acts were therein inserted and re-enacted.

Such, my lords, are the origin and spirit of our policy; and such are the laws existing upon this important point. And we have been often counselled by the wisest of our ancestors, that laws founded on a general principle, such as this distrust of political power in Roman Catholic hands, though originating in a particular danger, which has itself ceased to exist, may nevertheless be rightly retained, as safeguards against all other sorts of danger which fall within the scope of the same principle. But we are now told by the supporters of the present measure, that it is time to reverse our policy, and to repeal all our former laws upon this subject, and that the present bill is the first and fittest step to be taken towards so desirable an end.

My Lords.—Upon entering on this new course of policy, and considering how far we can safely proceed in this plan of repeal, and as to what we may do, or may not do, in the way of legislation, if we examine the ground before us step by step, we shall be enabled to judge more satisfactorily of the effect and bearings of the particular measure which we are desired this day to adopt. And in such a course I have always thought that little should be done upon mere importunity, nothing upon menaces (such as we have sometimes heard); but every thing that we can do for the ease of our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, so far as it can be done with safety to our own establishment in church and state; and so much, whatever be its amount, should, I think, be done freely and promptly upon its own fair grounds of justice and policy; and having done that, we should there, once for all, make our firm and final stand.

Of civil rights, I have always been of opinion, that the whole career of honours and emoluments should be laid open to the Roman Catholic Dissenters, as much as to the

* 1 Geo. I. c. 13. s. 16.

† 9 Geo. II. c. 26. s. 6.

Protestant Dissenters from our national church, short only of the ruling powers of our Protestant Church and Government. I rejoice, therefore, in the wise exercise of royal favour, in recently calling forth Roman Catholics of the highest rank to aid in the highest ceremonial of the royal state and dignity; and also in that signal mark of favour bestowed by the Sovereign, in his late visit to Ireland, upon the most eminent of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects. The bar, the army, and the navy are already open to them; and I see no reason whatever, against their admissibility to employment in all the services connected with the revenue, in all its various branches.

Of religious toleration, and security for the worship peculiar to their mode of faith, there cannot be too much granted; and we should remove every painful restriction that trenches upon their feelings, and adds nothing at the same time to our defence. Of this sort would be the more complete protection of their worship from disturbance, if they need it; and the removal of that necessity which now compels them to celebrate their marriages in our Church, from whose rights and tenets their faith is abhorrent.

But, my lords, the policy of our Protestant government still requires the continuance of other existing restrictions upon all that concerns the ostentatious display of their worship; we must have no stately churches,* no processions in our streets, no monastic establishments in our realms, such as Castle Brown, and Ampleforth, and Stonyhurst, with their Jesuit professors, priests, and missionaries: foundations erected in defiance of express law, and whose proceedings loudly call on the government and Parliament for public investigation. On this head also, in addition to the enactments of our present laws, we shall do well to bear in mind the plain policy and express provision of the famous edict of Nantes,† which forbids the public exercise of any

* Irish stats. 9 W. III. c. 1. s. 8; 8 Anne, c. 3; 21, 22 G. III. c. 62; 35 G. III. c. 21; 40 G. III. c. 85; English stats. 31 G. III. c. 32. s. 17.

† Edict of Nantes, article 15.—No Protestant worship in the army, “ si non aux quartiers des chefs qui en feront profession.”

other than the dominant religion in our fleets and armies, a possible attempt in the present growth of Roman Catholic pretensions, and which no man who values the safety of the state, can contemplate without just alarm.

With respect to the clergy of the church of Rome, as dissenters from our national Church, I think it is needless and unwise any longer to refuse the recognition of their existence as a body. Nor do I see, why the sovereign may not in England, as he was rightly advised to do in Ireland, receive their petitions and addresses in that character, as well as those of the Protestant Dissenting ministers (as they are called) of the three denominations.

But here, my lords, the necessity arises for new laws to regulate this ecclesiastical body; and the Sovereign and the state have a right to demand, that no ecclesiastical authority shall be exercised in this realm, by aliens, nor by natives long expatriated, nor by students educated (as they now are) under Jesuit professors at Rome, nor by members professed of any monastic order; we should have no arch-priests, no vicars-apostolic, the mere diplomatic agents and instruments of the court of Rome; no ecclesiastics should be recognized but those of episcopal secular character, whose powers and duties are defined by the canon law, and those individuals to be subject to the approbation of the Crown.

Further, my lords, the policy of all Europe, in Protestant, and even in Roman Catholic states, requires that the intercourse of their subjects with the See of Rome, be placed under the direct inspection and control of the Crown; and details of the necessary regulations, as substantiated by a report from a committee of the other House of Parliament communicated to this House, are now the standing diplomatic code of every nation in Europe, except our own. We must re-cast the provisions of the statute of Elizabeth;* and this is a work indispensably necessary, whatever else is to be done, and independently of all other measures. For

* 13 Eliz. c. 2.

Lord Clarendon has long since truly told us,* that it is vain to legislate concerning the Roman Catholic laity, unless you also bind their clergy; for they turn things civil into things spiritual at their pleasure; and holding in servitude the conscience, they do therefore govern also the actions of the laity.

Such privileges as I have presumed to specify, and any others of the like degree, but under such limitations and regulations as I have suggested, may and ought, in my opinion, to be granted freely and promptly; but no political power in the ruling offices of the state, no seats in the supreme courts of justice, none in the royal councils, none in our Houses of Parliament.

Our Protestant ascendancy must be paramount, or we shall have, in no long time, a Roman Catholic domination. Let us not deceive ourselves. These two claims to power are utterly incompatible, and irreconcilable.

The principles of the Roman Catholic religion are in direct hostility to the reformed religion; and the basis of my refusal to admit Roman Catholics to the supreme offices of the state, is founded in my conviction of their sincerity in the religion they profess.

If you ask for the evidence of this hostility, my lords, it is prominent and undeniable; not drawn from Transalpine authority, nor from Spanish bigotry, but from the highest authority in the Roman Catholic church of France, from the writings of the acknowledged champion of the liberties of the Gallican church, the celebrated Bossuet, whose exposition of the Roman Catholic doctrines is still the manual of the faithful; and in his great work upon the variations of the Protestant reformers from the true standard of the faith, we are told again and again:—"The exercise of the power of the sword in matters of religion and conscience, is a point not to be called in question. There is no illusion more dangerous than to make toleration a characteristic of the

* Lord Clarendon, Discourse on Religion and Policy, p. 667, 679.

true Church.”* “The Church of Rome is the most intolerant of all Christian sects. It is her holy and inflexible incompatibility which renders her severe, unconciliatory, and odious to all sects separated from her. They desire only to be tolerated by her; but her holy severity forbids such indulgence.”† These doctrines renewed, as they have been in our own times by the pontifical authority itself,‡ it is in vain for the Roman Catholic laity to disclaim, unless their clergy also, in whose hands their conscience is placed, shall now come forward and openly renounce this hostility.

We are told, I know, that our fears are nevertheless visionary, and the dangers we apprehend are unreal; that we who oppose these claims to power miscalculate their strength, and misrepresent the spirit of the Roman Catholic Church in the present times;—that what once was hostile, is now changed and mitigated; that other states wisely adopt a more liberal policy;—and finally, that whatever be the principles of the Roman Catholics, their numbers are too disproportionate to ours, in this House, to give us cause for alarm.

Upon each of these points, my lords, a few words may suffice. And first, as to the mitigated spirit of hostility to our Church in modern times. All who have visited the continent of late years, will, I am sure, be forward to allow, that the dignified simplicity, and unaffected piety of the reigning Pontiff, and the courteous attentions of his ruling minister to foreigners of all nations, and of England more especially, do justly command our respect and grateful acknowledgment. But it is not upon such grounds that we must legislate concerning the defences of our Protestant government. For history has recorded the circular mandates,§ issued by the present Pontiff himself, when torn from his dominions, and carried into exile, by the brutal violence of France; mandates replete with the doctrines which we

* Bossuet, *Hist. des Variations*, livre X.

† *Hist. de Variations*, Sixième Avertissement.

‡ Circular Letter of Pius VII. to the Cardinals, 5th Feb. 1808.

§ *Id.* 5th Feb. 1808.

have most cause to dread; and history will not fail to record also, that, upon his restoration, he has re-peopled Italy with monks of all orders, and revived the Jesuits, whom all Europe had proscribed; and has opened the way for a Jesuit confessor to stand once more by the throne of a monarch.* And amongst the latest proofs of the same unchangeable hostility to Protestants, as such, the court of Rome has recently refused to protect from insult and destruction the Protestant tombs which have been erected within the walls of Rome; and has refused this reasonable request to the joint solicitation of all the Protestants of Europe there resident, though strongly urged by the diplomatic representative of one great Protestant power,† and repeatedly pressed by the presumptive heir of another Protestant crown,‡ an illustrious person, now no stranger to the habits and institutions of this country.

But then, my lords, we are next desired to withdraw our views from Transalpine to Transappennine Rome; not to look to the dark dogmas of the Vatican, nor to the superstitious credulity of a people who could attest or believe in the modern miracles of 1797 or 1811;§ we are desired to come forth and look upon the map of enlightened Europe, and take example from the more liberal policy of other states, which rule over a mixed population of different modes of faith.

Be it so. And what shall we find here? Roman Catholic sovereigns, such as France, Austria, and Saxony, (for Spain and Portugal are blotted out and of no value in such a question,) ruling Protestant subjects; and Protestant

* King of Sardinia, 1822. † Envoy of Prussia. ‡ Prince of Denmark.

§ See "Miraculous Appearances of the Images of the Blessed Virgin opening her eyes in various parts of the Roman state, between 9th July, 1796, and January, 1797, published at Rome, 1797, by D. Gio. Marchetti, Examinatore Apostolico; with 962 Attestations by persons of the highest rank and credit." 1 vol. 8vo. Also the "Miraculous Extasies of the present Pope at Savona, in June, August, and September, 1811," engraved and circulated throughout Italy.

sovereigns, such as Prussia, Sweden, Denmark, and the Netherlands, ruling over Roman Catholic subjects.

Of these, the Roman Catholic sovereign has nothing to fear from the admission of Protestant subjects to political power; for the Protestant has no foreign connexion, no proselyting spirit in his religion, and he may be put down with the stroke of a pen.

The Protestant sovereign has, in every instance, jealously bound his Roman Catholic subject from any unauthorized intercourse with Rome; and he can equally dismiss him, if troublesome, by the same process.

My Lords.—There is among these, no case parallel to ours. Arbitrary governments and limited governments stand on a different footing, as to the power and privileges which they can safely allow to the different classes of their subjects; and there exists no other country but this, where character, talents, and popular credit, can raise any subject instantly to that eminence which commands an entrance into the service of his sovereign, and give him an effective share in the ruling councils of the state, for its preservation, or for its destruction, as the event may prove.

It is urged, in the last place, that the danger which we object to the present measure, must have reference to the numbers of those whose pretensions, if admitted, are to create the danger. This is undoubtedly true. But we must be careful, not to lay what ought to be the durable foundations of our legislation upon shifting grounds. In legislation, as in every other prudential and practical question, we should consider to-morrow as to-day. And it is amazing to me, that any persons of ordinary sagacity can fail to foresee, that the paucity of present numbers affords no security against their future increase.

Any powerful minister of the Crown, my lords, who advocates measures like the present, with a strong sense of the injustice which (according to his view) the existing families who constitute the Roman Catholic gentry have long suffered, may, and ought, upon his own principles, to make them speedy and full compensation for their long-intercepted

honours. In the reign of Queen Anne, we have a precedent for a simultaneous addition to our peerage of no inconsiderable amount; and in proportion as the grievance is considered to have been long, heavy and unjustifiable, such in proportion would naturally be the reparation. We might well look to have in our House a much larger importation than took place at that period; and successive ministers, under the occasional difficulties which beset them, when the gates were set open, and the broad path paved, might, and would enlarge the number without stint or limit.

By irresistible inference, my lords, what might be called equal justice should be done also with respect to the other House of Parliament. The Roman Catholic elector must be allowed to elect Roman Catholic representatives for his country, whether in England or Ireland, and I leave it to your lordships' meditation, how soon, and by what courses, political ambition, coupled with or goaded by religious zeal, duly directed, might gradually appropriate to itself, by the wealth of ancient and opulent families, much also of that description of property, which locally influences the return of other members to the Commons' House of Parliament. I verily believe, that the current would set strongly and constantly in that direction, and the consequences are manifest.

And now, my lords, to conclude these observations with which I have already troubled your lordships at too great length—With my view of the present character and future consequences of this measure, by which a new form of party spirit will be introduced into both Houses of Parliament, directed always, under all circumstances, steadily and invariably to one and the same sole object, by which polemics will be revived in our universities, discord spread through our municipal corporations, the land peopled with more Jesuit establishments for the education of our youth, and a restless, proselyting clergy, with all their missionaries, set at work throughout the country—and preferring as I do the national character and habits of our country as they now prevail, the sober piety of our Protestant form of worship, and the mild and tolerant spirit of the Church of England, rightly under-

stood, I must of necessity vote against the further progress of this bill; and I shall therefore conclude, with proposing as an amendment to the original motion, "That instead of this bill being now read a second time, it be read a second time on this day six months."

The Amendment was carried by a majority of 42.

Being for the amendment 171

Against the amendment 129

Majority against the original motion . 42

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE CHARLES MANNERS SUTTON,

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

—◆—

The House of Commons having resolved itself into a Committee on the Roman Catholic Disability Relief Bill, March 26, 1821, the Speaker, the Right Hon. CHARLES MANNERS SUTTON, thus addressed the Committee.

—

I THINK it right to express my sentiments on the present occasion, and to state the reasons which lead me to oppose those from whom I have the misfortune to differ on the present occasion. I will endeavour to confine myself to the clause (respecting the Declaration of Transubstantiation) now before the committee, and abstain from going generally into the merits of the bill.

I admit, with every one who has spoken, that the exclusion of the Roman Catholics is a great evil—an evil that cannot be justified without an adequate reason. But the framers of this bill recognize the principle of exclusion—of absolute, unqualified exclusion—from holding ecclesiastical and judicial office, connected with the administration of the laws affecting the Established Church. I do not but say that this may be perfectly justifiable; but, when there is a jea-

lousy of a person professing the Roman Catholic religion participating in the administration of the laws directly affecting the Church, I do not know how I am to be answered when I object to their participation in the framing of laws by which the Church is to be governed. This consideration leads immediately to that of the clause by which the Roman Catholics are to be admitted into the two Houses of Parliament.

When I look to the preamble of this bill, in which it is stated, that the laws relating to the ecclesiastical establishment are permanently established, it is a necessary inference, that the Roman Catholics are excluded from judicial offices in ecclesiastical matters, lest any injury should arise from their mal-administration. But when those laws are said to be permanently established, the meaning of these words can only be, that they are permanent so long as it shall not please Parliament to alter them. Is it not reasonable, therefore, to feel a jealousy as to the continuance of those laws, as well as to guard against their mal-administration?

The honourable member (Mr. Calcraft) who has just sat down, seems to think that the honourable member for Corfe Castle (Mr. Banks) has carried his views of danger to an unnecessary extent; but it surely behoves us, in legislating on so important a subject, to take the longest view within our reach; for the law once passed is beyond our reach, and if any consequent mischief should arise, it will be no answer to say that the law may be repealed. The honourable member for Corfe Castle said, that there is much ground for alarm; and the honourable member who last addressed the House, thought there is no ground at all; but both the one and the other opinion are mere speculations. They are speculations upon which I do not presume to judge; but I must say, that upon a question of such paramount importance, I would rather look to the security of the law, than trust to the results of chance.

The honourable member for Bramber said, the other night, that he felt strongly inclined to believe that if the restrictions upon the Roman Catholics were removed, many

of them would abandon their faith, and become Protestants. It is natural for that honourable gentleman, being himself an extraordinary good Protestant, and looking as he did to the intrinsic merits of the Protestant faith, to entertain such an opinion; but I doubt whether a good Roman Catholic will not be equally inclined to say, "only give me admission into the House of Commons, and I will so convince you of the truth of my religion, that you will all turn Roman Catholics." Believing, then, that it is a proper jealousy which excludes Roman Catholics from the administration of certain laws, I must confess that I cannot see how the same exclusion should not apply to the present case.

In reference to the alterations proposed on a former night; not wishing to disguise my opinions—which are unfavourable to the general provisions of the bill, still I admit, that the difficulties are accumulated in consequence of the alteration which has been made in the clause originally proposed. It is contended by some honourable gentlemen, that the words proposed to be added, make no difference in the meaning of the clause; but, if that were so, where is the necessity for alteration?

I would wish to know, why a severer oath is to be imposed on the Protestant than on the Roman Catholic? If that at present in existence is not thought necessary to secure the Roman Catholic, I can understand why it is altered; but I cannot understand why a more rigorous oath should be tendered to the Protestant than is administered to the Roman Catholic. The decision of the House on a former night has thrown some difficulty in the way of our proceeding. It is now said, that there will be a sort of breaking faith, if the House adopts the present proposition (for excluding Roman Catholics from seats in Parliament) after deciding as we have done on the oath. I do not see that there will be any inconsistency in adopting the present amendment. The oath which has been decided on, will admit the Roman Catholic to many situations which he did not fill before; and therefore it is not fair to charge the House with inconsistency, if, having agreed to the oath proposed on a former

day, we should now adopt the amendment. The difficulty that I have from the beginning is this:—I object to two oaths being tendered; and the more so, as the more rigorous oath is reserved for the Protestants.

The honourable gentleman who spoke last has said, that the whole question turns upon three points; whether, on the admission of the Roman Catholics to Parliament, the safety of the State can be guaranteed; whether the conduct of the Roman Catholics entitles them to such a privilege; and whether, supposing those points to be allowed, this is not the most convenient time that the concession ought to be made? With respect to the last, though I have not the same confidence in the success of the measure, I agree with the honourable member, that never was there a time when the deliberate judgment of Parliament was more likely to be the deliberate judgment of the people. As to the second point, I am most willing to admit that their conduct, for a long time past, entitles them to every thing that can be granted consistently with the safety of the State. I do not doubt their sincerity, but I do not think, that their admission to seats in Parliament is a privilege, which, in conformity with their tenets, they can exercise beneficially to the country and with safety to the Constitution. In my conscience I do not believe that such a privilege can be safely granted. This is my sincere and deliberate opinion; and, as an honest man, I feel myself bound to support my honourable friend's amendment.*

* Mr. Bankes moved for the insertion of a clause in the bill, excluding Roman Catholics from seats in Parliament.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE ROBERT PEEL,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

WHEN Sir Francis Burdett introduced his motion for a Committee of the House of Commons, respecting the Roman Catholic claims, February 28th, 1825; the Right Honourable ROBERT PEEL, Representative for the University of Oxford, Secretary of State for the Home Department, and formerly Chief Secretary of Ireland, delivered in the House, the following nervous Oration—equally eminent for its perspicuous and argumentative detail, as well as, its statesman-like, constitutional, and Protestant maxims.

NOTWITHSTANDING, Sir, the length of time occupied by my right honourable and learned friend, (Mr. Plunkett,) I feel such confidence in the indulgence of the House, or rather in its justice, that I have no doubt it will allow me to state, as briefly as I can, the grounds upon which I dissent from the proposition of the honourable baronet, and the reasons why, after all the arguments I have heard, I do not find them sufficient to induce me to deviate from the course I have hitherto uniformly pursued upon this question. I will attempt to follow, as closely as I can, the different branches of the very able, and not less effective, because temperate and conciliatory, speech of the honourable baronet.

I think, Sir, that he introduced this question for discussion on its true grounds, and I will apply myself to answer the questions put by him to the opponents of further concession. I apprehend that I state his case with perfect fairness, when I say that he rested his proposition upon three grounds; first, positive treaty; second, natural right; and, third, prudence and policy. All the arguments he employed may be included under those heads, and in that order I propose to consider them. If, in the first place, the honourable baronet could prove to me that there really existed a claim on the part of the Roman Catholics established upon a solemn

treaty between them and the Crown, I should be disposed to treat it with the utmost deference. The honourable baronet, and I believe the petition which he presented, demand the fulfilment of a treaty.

I have, Sir, on previous occasions, considered the effect of the treaty to which they allude, and I am again prepared to deny, that the Roman Catholics can claim any privilege on the foundation of the treaty of Limerick. It is, no doubt, important for the House to consider whether, in withholding what is now required at its hands, it is violating the terms of a solemn treaty: and I beg to ask the honourable baronet, whether he has referred to the articles of that treaty, and whether he really thinks, not that it has been infringed at any former period of our history, but whether any privilege is refused in defiance of it? I will not now enter into the question whether the act passed early in the reign of Queen Anne was an infringement of the treaty of Limerick. I admit very fairly, that the statute "for the prevention of the growth of Popery," was an abominable measure. Perhaps this is an unpleasant point of discussion; and as the honourable baronet very wisely abstained from entering upon it, I will follow his example; merely observing that before we condemn the laws of the land, we are bound to consider the circumstances out of which they arose; and from those circumstances it appears, that it was an act of retaliation against the Roman Catholics, for what they had done while in possession of political power.

The honourable baronet will find, Sir, that by the first article of the treaty of Limerick, the Roman Catholics were entitled to be exempted from all molestation on account of their religious tenets; by other articles certain persons might claim the privileges of personal property, on taking no other oath but that of allegiance. Now, the honourable baronet extends this right to a claim, that the Roman Catholics shall be entitled to the enjoyment of civil office on taking the oath of allegiance only. That, Sir, I beg leave to deny; and I am content to rest my denial upon the Speech of Sir T. Butler, who was employed by the Roman Catholics to speak,

at the bar of the House of Lords, against the passing of the bill to prevent the growth of Popery. Sir T. Butler says, "the 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 14th clauses of this bill relate to offices and employments, which the Papists of Ireland cannot hope for the enjoyment of, otherwise than by grace and favour extraordinary; and therefore do not so much affect them, as it does the Protestant Dissenters, who, if this bill pass into a law, are equally with the Papists, deprived of bearing any office civil or military, under the government to which by right of birth, and the laws of the land, they are as indisputably entitled as any other their Protestant brethren; and if what the Irish did in the late disorders of this kingdom made them rebels, (which the presence of a king they had before been obliged to own, and swear obedience to, gave them a reasonable colour of concluding it did not,) yet surely the Dissenters did not do any thing to make them so, or to deserve worse at the hands of the government than other Protestants; but, on the contrary, it is more than probable, that if they (I mean the Dissenters,) had not put a stop to the career of the Irish army at Enniskillen and Londonderry, the settlement of the government, both in England and Scotland, might not have proved so easy as it thereby did; for if that army had got to Scotland (as there was nothing at that time to have hindered them, but the bravery of those people, who were mostly Dissenters, and chargeable with no other crimes since, unless their close adhering to, and easily appearing for, the then government, and the many faithful services they did their country were crimes,) I say if they had got to Scotland, when they had boats, barks, and all things else ready for their transportation, and a great many friends there in arms, waiting only their coming to join them, it is easy to think what the consequences would have been to both these kingdoms; and these Dissenters then were thought fit for command, both civil and military, and were no less instrumental in contributing to the reducing the kingdom, than any other Protestants; and to pass a bill now to deprive them of their birth-rights for those their

good services, would surely be a most unkind return, and the worst reward ever granted to a people so deserving. Whatever the Papists may be supposed to have deserved, the Dissenters certainly stand as clear in the face of the present government, as any other people whatsoever; and if this is all the return they are likely to get, it will be but a slender encouragement, if ever occasion should require for others to pursue their example." Sir T. Butler thus abandons all claim to civil office. Yet he was Solicitor-General to James II.—was employed in drawing up the treaty of Limerick, and was engaged by the Roman Catholics against the bill in the reign of Queen Anne, I therefore think that we are quite at liberty to discuss this question, without having to combat any argument founded upon a supposed breach of the faith of treaties.

Next, Sir, the honourable baronet, and my right honourable and learned friend rest this claim upon the ground of natural right. And here again I directly join issue with them both. Indeed, this is one of the material points upon which I have the misfortune to differ from some of the friends with whom I am in the habit of acting. It involves a great constitutional question, and my right honourable and learned friend goes even so far as to argue, that we have no more right to exclude Roman Catholics from civil office, than we have to divest them of their property. He places the spoliation of property and the exclusion from civil office, on precisely the same footing, but he admits that both may be sacrificed to considerations of paramount necessity; but then that necessity must be clearly established. I cannot allow that the subjects of this country have any such claim as an abstract right, and I do not believe that the doctrine was avowed or maintained until comparatively recent times; I mean, until the year 1790. Let us look for a moment at the great periods in the history of the constitution. Previously to the Reformation there was unanimity in religious opinion: there was no dissent, and consequently no motive to exclude, and no reason for guards or checks; for

it is to be observed, that these regulations now complained of, are not so much checks on' the privileges of the subject, as guards that have been introduced from a reasonable jealousy.

Now, Sir, what has been the practice of the constitution since the Reformation, when religious dissent first became important? I say that the last three hundred years have afforded a practical contradiction of the doctrine laid down by the supporters of the claims of the Roman Catholics. At the time of the Reformation, the oath of Supremacy was administered; and from the reign of Elizabeth up to the present moment, that oath has been enforced, and has operated to the exclusion of the Roman Catholics from office and from seats in this House. My right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, says that the law of exclusion had its origin only about an hundred and fifty years ago, but I deny the position; it had its origin with the first rise of dissent in matters of religion.

What, Sir, let me inquire, has been the doctrine maintained by the most celebrated public men on the subject of exclusion from civil offices. I have had occasion before to refer to opinions entitled to the highest respect, especially from those honourable members to whom I am particularly addressing myself. A conference was held respecting the bill for Occasional Conformity, and the lords who conducted it, had objected to a measure which subjected to the penalty of perpetual forfeiture of office those who were guilty of the crime of occasional conformity. At the conference they stated this important doctrine: "The lords look on the fixing of the qualifications for places of trust to be a thing so entirely lodged within the legislature, that, without giving any reason for it, upon any apprehension of danger, however remote, every government may put such rules, restraints, or conditions on all who serve in any place of trust, as they shall see cause for; but penalties and punishments are of another nature."* Now, can any thing be more clearly laid

* Parliamentary History, vol. vi. p. 80.

down than the distinction here taken between exclusion and penalty? And who were the lords that presided at the conference? The Duke of Devonshire, the Earl of Peterborough, Bishop Burnett, Lord Halifax, and lastly, Lord Somers himself.

Next, Sir, let me ask my right honourable and learned friend, what he says to that article in the Scotch Act of Union, which permanently excludes Roman Catholics from certain offices? If there be this natural right, and if that natural right be correspondent with the right of property, is it possible to suppose that the great men who adjusted the articles of the Scotch Union, would have allowed this permanent exclusion of the Roman Catholics? And yet without any of those immediate dangers from the power and tenets of the Roman Catholic Church, about which my right honourable and learned friend has spoken as the only causes which could justify such a measure now, the law of exclusion was introduced into that act of Union. But I much rather wish that the House would look at the debates of Parliament in a more recent period of our history.

But, Sir, coming to periods nearer our own times, when the dangers from Popery may be supposed to have had less influence, I would call the attention of the House to the debates which took place in 1771, and 1774, on the subject of the Quebec Act,—let us look at the doctrine maintained by Lord Chatham and Lord Camden, regarding the oath of Supremacy. Both these distinguished men asserted, that the oath of Supremacy was as sacred and as obligatory as Magna Charta itself, or any of the most sacred acts made at any period of our history.

Now, Sir, can these opinions be reconciled with the claim of natural right? I very freely admit, that, at the conference to which I have referred, the peers who managed it, allowed, that exclusion from office by law was a punishment of the severest kind. But, at a still more recent period of our history, in 1790, when the repeal of the Test Laws was under consideration, did Mr. Pitt admit the doctrine now contended for? Certainly not. Mr. Burke's dissent at that

time, was on the score of danger from the Unitarians; but Mr. Pitt, a supporter of the Roman Catholics, directly contradicted the position of the honourable baronet, and my right honourable friend. It should be recollected, that the Test Laws then under discussion, were enacted with a view to the defence and preservation of the constitution, and Mr. Pitt told the House, "he hesitated not to say, that if distrust were entertained of any one of the three branches of the constitution, it ought to be directed against the Executive power. The persons excluded by the Test Laws, laboured under no kind of stigma; but it was the policy of private life, not to allow any man to manage your affairs, whose principles you did not like; but the exclusion of Dissenters could be looked upon as no punishment."

It seems to me, Sir, that the power of sitting here, or of voting for members, is just as much a natural right, as that for which my right honourable friend contends. Practically we know that, by an arbitrary distinction, persons who have not three hundred pounds a year, are not allowed to represent their fellow-subjects, and that a qualification of an inferior kind is also required from the electors. If the doctrine of natural right be correct, why are not individuals with two hundred pounds a year allowed to sit in the House of Commons, or why have not all the inhabitants of the kingdom a right to send them to it? The fact is, the right, such as it is, is sacrificed to State considerations. I know that the ground of exclusion in the case of the Roman Catholics is different, and I do not say that it is more mortifying because it is a personal exclusion; but I say, that the violation of right is the same.

Thus, Sir, I think I have shown why, on the grounds of authority and analogy, I differ from my right honourable and learned friend. If I could see any violation of natural right, and that any needless stigma was inflicted by the exclusion, I should be compelled to admit, that it was a grievance of a much more onerous nature. But I contend, Sir, that the State has a right to exclude on any apprehension of

danger, and that not imminent or immediate, the *onus probandi* of which my right honourable friend would unfairly cast upon the opponents of the claims. My right honourable friend says, he would not convert the philosophy of history into a miserable almanack, or represent experience as a swindler, passing base money upon mankind. I agree with him; and I would look back to history for the instructive lesson it affords; and I would consult experience upon the abuses of power in all ages. If we were to follow the advice of the honourable baronet, we should neither take a retrospect of the past, nor a prospect of the future. He would neither be guided by events that have already occurred, nor look to the remoter consequences of granting what is required. This is certainly a very convenient way of arguing the question, but, for one, I beg to protest against the conclusiveness of any such arguments. I think, Sir, that we are bound to consider what further measures may grow out of that which is now proposed. I ask, Sir, where is the overruling necessity for admitting these claims? For though Mr. Burke observes, that "it is a question of moral and virtuous discretion, whether, possessing a right you will exercise it," I contend that we possess the right—that we ought to possess it, and that a sound discretion requires that we should exercise it.

With regard, Sir, to the grounds on which I oppose myself to the demand now made, I have heard several imputed, upon which I do not mean at all to rely. First, I do not consider that we are obliged to take into view, laws passed at an earlier period of our history, unless they are solemn national compacts—the foundation and settlement of important systems of government; but I cannot but bear in mind, that laws were passed three hundred, and one hundred and fifty years ago, guarding against what were then looked upon as dangers. I am bound, on the other hand, to admit, that the time is come, when we ought to consider whether there exists a necessity for maintaining them. I allow that exclusion from office is of itself an evil; I regret it, and I can only justify it as a defence against a greater evil; but, Sir,

upon these grounds I am against the motion of the honourable baronet.

Sir, the real question for the House now to determine is, whether there are sufficient reasons for retaining in their present force the existing laws against the Roman Catholics? And having stated to the House why I cannot admit the honourable baronet's proposition, either on the ground of the treaty of Limerick, or of the abstract right, I come now to the considerations of prudence and policy, by which I have been led to a similar conclusion. The honourable baronet tells us, that he has never heard what the danger is; and he calls upon the opponents of his motion to point it out.

Before I answer this call, I wish to inquire of the honourable baronet, what is the object of his present proposition? I presume that the object is, to communicate power to those who are at present excluded from it—to devolve upon them a fair share in the framing, administering, and executing of the laws. Does the honourable baronet mean to give a mere barren capacity, never hereafter to be available? He can only claim upon this ground; as there is no danger, so there ought to be no disability—no distinction between the privileges of any of the subjects of the realm, but all ought to be equally eligible. If the two Houses of Parliament mean to pass a measure of this kind, surely there can be nothing more unfair than to throw the odium of refusal of office elsewhere, and to create an unjust impression against the highest personage in the realm. Parliament ought not to give the claimants a ticket of admission, and when it is presented at the door of the constitution, trust to the Crown to shut that door in the face of the party claiming a right to be allowed to enter.

I come then to what, in fact, Sir, is the main point, and which has reference to the circumstances of Ireland; and I ask first, whether the power sought can safely be granted; and whether, if granted, it will conduce to tranquillity? I must own, that if I were perfectly satisfied that concession would lead to the restoration of peace and harmony; if I thought it would put an end to animosities, the existence of

which all lament, I, for one, would not oppose the measure on a mere theory of the constitution, when consent would secure such immense practical advantages. But, Sir, because I doubt whether the removal of disabilities on the conditions proposed, will promote tranquillity in Ireland, or lessen religious animosities; and because I think you cannot safely remove the disabilities, I am disposed to continue the exclusion.

Now, Sir, let me ask, are these civil disabilities the cause of the disorders which have so long prevailed in Ireland? If you trace back these disorders as far as actual commotion is concerned, you will find that they have no such origin. How happens it, otherwise, that the partial removal of disabilities has not been attended with any beneficial effect? How happens it, otherwise, that, in the Province of Ulster, where the number of Protestants outbalance the Roman Catholics, the Insurrection Act has not been in a single instance enforced? In 1792, the Roman Catholics came forward, and asked to be rendered capable of holding the office of magistrates, and of enjoying the elective franchise. They wanted, they said, nothing more and those persons grossly maligned them, who said that their wishes went further. The elective franchise was conceded even more fully than they requested it; and Roman Catholics were permitted to serve as well on grand, as on petty juries. Since these concessions, has there been any diminution of party feeling, and factious animosities? Do the Protestants and Roman Catholics live upon better terms than before? I think not.

But, Sir, the answer of the supporters of this proposition will be "while you retain anything, while you refuse to put both parties upon an entire equality, the evil will continue; but, as soon as they are equal, it will cease." Admitting this, for the sake of argument, for a moment, will the concession now claimed put them on an entire equality? What is claimed is a mere capacity or eligibility to office, and after you have granted that, will you be able to concede what the Roman Catholics would consider a just distribution of office? Would not the distinction thus necessarily drawn, be infinitely more galling and mortifying, since it would be re-

duced to a mere personal exclusion? When vacancies occurred, if a Protestant were preferred to a Roman Catholic would it not constantly expose the government to jealousy and reproach?

Without reviving painful recollections of past rebellions, let us consider, Sir, after the removal of the disabilities, the very anomalous situation of Ireland. It appears to me, that those persons always act unfairly, who connect these disabilities with the penal laws against the Roman Catholics. No man holds in greater detestation than I do those penal laws; I do not mean to inquire whether they were necessary by way of retaliation; but, as I before stated, I draw a clear distinction between disability and punishment. But, look at the anomalous state of Ireland in respect to property. The respective numbers of the Roman Catholics and the Protestants may be 4,200,000 to 1,800,000; but I do not overstate it when I say, that, notwithstanding this disproportion, the property in the hands of the Protestants is as twenty to one; some have asserted that it is fifty to one; but I do not think it near that amount.

After equal capacity of office, shall have been given to all, the religion of the minority is to remain the religion of the state. I am told, Sir, that it is perfectly safe in Ireland to admit the professors of all religions to the enjoyment of the same privileges; and after this has been accomplished, the Protestant Church is still to be retained. I know several honourable members, and among them the member for Montrose (Mr. Hume), who contend, that it is impossible. On this point he agrees with me; for, over and over again, he has argued, that it is a mere mockery to suppose that the Roman Catholics will be satisfied with a Protestant Church Establishment. They will constantly endeavour to recover the power they have lost, by overturning a system which they view with other eyes than ours.

It is not necessary for me to say, Sir, that I would disbelieve a Roman Catholic on his oath. God forbid: I do not say so; on the contrary, I will put him on the same footing with the Protestant, and admit that, in all the relations of

private life, he is as valuable a member of society. But, supposing him true to his own principles, and to possess the ordinary feelings of man, he cannot look with a friendly eye upon those events which we are accustomed to reverence, and upon that system of religion which has grown out of them. Can he regard the Reformation, for instance, with the feelings of a Protestant?

Sir, my right honourable and learned friend says, "you find that, at the Revolution, the danger to be apprehended was from a Roman Catholic King. What did you do then? Why, you passed a law, that the King of England should act in conformity with the law of England. But, Sir, there was a danger of another kind in the reign of Charles II. Charles II. was in outward appearance a Protestant; and it was not until his death that it was discovered what Charles II. was. My right honourable friend says, if the evils that threatened us in the reign of Charles II. are at an end, why not remove your restrictions in this case? Now, Sir, what would the bill proposed to be brought in do? The Roman Catholic is to be admitted without restriction into Parliament, and into office, provided the King approves of him. He is to be as perfectly free as we are ourselves, unfettered by any restrictions, and at liberty to pursue what he conceives to be the interests of his country and the justice of his cause, with perfect freedom. You tell us, that these laws have the effect to extinguish the fervour of hearts that may be "pregnant with celestial fire," almost celestial, and to paralyse the hands that might have swayed "the rod of empire." When this man comes to be the leader of a party, has he not a right to maintain the religion to which he belongs? I speak not of the demagogue, whom my right honourable friend says, he should like to see in this House, as he would soon find his level; but I take the case of a man sincerely attached to his religion.

We are told, Sir, in this very petition, that the professors of the Roman Catholic faith in England and Ireland exceed in numbers the members of the Established Church. Be it so. This individual, then, comes into this House sin-

cerely attached to the religion in which he has been educated, and which is a sufficient reason for his adhering to it—he has all the influence which his personal character gives him; he is placed at the head of a party. Is the Crown to say, “although you are a man of powerful abilities, yet I must shut you out?” After you have capacitated him to become Secretary of State, or first lord of the Treasury, is the Crown to turn round and say, “I cannot admit you?” Is that the way to conciliate such a man as this? But, suppose, Sir, the Crown employs him in its service—in what a situation do you place him? Can he exercise a sound discretion, in regard to those measures which relate to the safety of the Church of England? It appears to me, he cannot give a safe judgment; and therefore I am for excluding him; and not trusting to the Crown to refuse the ticket of admission you have given him.

Then, Sir, am I to be told, that I am insulting the professors of this faith, if I admit that I view the tenets of such a religion with distrust? I have a right to look to the influence which it possesses over the minds of men; and I do say, I view with the greatest jealousy the re-admission of the Roman Catholics to office. It is most extraordinary that we should be taunted in this way now, seeing that up to this hour of debate, we have not heard one single word on the subject of those securities which used to form so considerable a part of the Roman Catholic professions. Are they content, I ask, to give us those securities which are taken by every other state in Europe? I believe there is not a state that admits their professors, that does not keep a direct controul over their appointment.

It is supposed, Sir, that after you have decided in favour of the prayer of this petition, if you should do so, that there will be an end of all religious animosity; and my right honourable friend asks, “are you afraid of the Pope in these days?” I am not afraid of the Pope nor of the Pretender; but I am afraid of a powerful internal party in this country, of whom great numbers are dissatisfied, as they must be, with our principles of religion.

When I hear, Sir, that the nature of the Roman Catholic religion is changed, I must say, after a pretty accurate review of what has been passing in Ireland—and I say it in no unfriendly spirit—that that church would have consulted its own dignity much better, if it had avoided several publications that have lately appeared. In proof of the little alteration which the spirit of the Roman Catholic religion appears to have experienced from time, notwithstanding all the asserted illumination of the nineteenth century, I will read a passage from a little work published by one Coyne, relative to the miracles performed by Prince Hohenlohe; and I contend, that so far from the change which gentlemen speak of, having taken place, I believe the laugh with which they greeted the mention of the name of Prince Hohenlohe, would have offended no set of persons so grievously as the Roman Catholic priesthood of Ireland. Amongst the number of cures performed by his Highness in the city of Wurtzburgh, was that of the Princess Matilda Von Schwartzburgh. She had been lame from her eighth to her seventeenth year, and had vainly expended on medical aid 80,000 florins—but was cured by the Prince's intercession. The Wurtzburgh doctors, who got the 80,000 florins, must have had a very fine time of it; the name of Prince Hohenlohe cannot be very popular among them, at any rate. But at Bamberg the Prince's success was still more miraculous. Two sisters who had been confined with lameness for ten years were cured. Councillor Jacob, a councillor of state, who had not stirred out of his chamber for some years, suddenly accompanied his doctor from the third story to the street door. A beneficed clergyman was cured of the gout while passing through the streets of Bamberg, without even getting out of his carriage; and, besides these, an upholsterer, a saddler, and a stone-mason, had all been operated upon by similar miracles. The saddler could now look after his workmen, without stick or crutch (a laugh.) Honourable gentlemen may laugh, if they please, at so much credulity; but they should know, that in no part of the world are the

wonder-workings of Prince Hohenlohe talked of with more profound respect and faith than in Ireland.

I will next, Sir, read an extract from a book signed J. K. L., said to be written by Dr. Doyle, being a communication to the whole Roman Catholic communion of Ireland, of the rescript of Leo XII., the present Pope, addressed to the bishops, &c.; complaining of the mischief effected by Bible Societies, and containing this passage: "The power of temporal princes will, we trust in the Lord, come to your assistance, whose interests, as experience shows, are always concerned when yours are in danger, for it never hath happened that the things which are Cæsar's are given unto Cæsar, if the things which are God's be not given unto God." Now, Sir, a letter of this kind, talking of the temporal power of other princes coming in to suppress Bible Associations, appears to me to hold out a doctrine as monstrous as well can be maintained. If there were any thing wanting, which would call upon me to express my decided opposition to the claims of the Roman Catholics, it would be the admission of letters of this sort, published by the authority of the Roman Catholics in Ireland, containing passages of this description.

My belief is, Sir, that, after they obtain those privileges which they seek, they will not cease in their endeavours, but will still struggle for the pre-eminence of their religion. That is not my opinion only. The same Dr. Doyle says, "Catholic emancipation will not remedy the evils of the tithe system; it will not allay the fervour of religious zeal." Indeed, how can the removal of civil disabilities extinguish the fervour of religious zeal? The bishop goes on to say, "the perpetual clashing of two churches, the one elevating, the other falling, both high-minded, will not check the rancorous animosities with which different sects assail each other; it will not remove the suspicion of partiality in the government, it will not create sympathy between the different orders of the state, which is mainly dependent on religion, nor produce unlimited confidence between man and man. Emancipation would only lead a passage to ulterior

measures." What are the "ulterior measures" to which Dr. Doyle alludes? I do not pretend to know their object, but such language satisfies me, that if the disabilities were removed, the Roman Catholics would not be satisfied—

"Still to new heights their restless wishes soar;
Claim leads to claim, as power advances more."

I cannot, Sir, but express my regret in differing from my right honourable and other friends, with whom I am accustomed to act; and, at the same time, my anxiety that penal laws should be abolished, together with offensive processions and all other local causes of discontent and heart-burning. I do not deny that great evil may have been done by the policy which had been formerly pursued towards Ireland; but that is no reason why the measure which is now urged should be adopted. It is no reason why I should change the opinions I have formed upon a serious and firm conviction. It is the duty of public men to act on their own impressions, and not to defer to authority, however high it might be, while they are unconvinced by argument. I am not convinced by the arguments I have heard; and I shall therefore not defer to the authority by which they are enforced.

Without, Sir, dwelling on the objections as to the time at which this motion is proposed, or its present expediency, I openly announce my objection to its principle. I shall, therefore, pursue the course which hitherto I have uniformly persisted in, and give my decided opposition to the measure.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE ROBERT PEEL,

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT.

IN the House of Commons, March 5th, 1827, Sir Francis Burdett moved, "That the House is deeply impressed with the necessity of taking into its immediate consideration the present state of the laws by means of which their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects are affected with civil disabilities, with a view to their relief from the same." But, the debate being adjourned, it was resumed on March 6th, 1827, when several individuals having delivered their sentiments, the Right Honourable ROBERT PEEL, Secretary of State for the Home Department, and Representative for the University of Oxford, addressed the House, in the following eloquent, argumentative, statesman-like, and truly Protestant diction.

SIR.—If I were to be influenced solely by considerations of personal interest, I should have very little doubt, as to the course I should pursue on this occasion—for what personal advantage can it be to me, that a penal system should be continued? Nothing could have induced me after all that has passed on this subject, to present myself to the notice of the House now, except an overpowering sense of public duty; for, it is most painful and nauseous, to be obliged to tax one's ingenuity to find new arguments on a topic which has been already exhausted. But I have no alternative. I shall not shrink, Sir, from my public duty, whether I shall meet with the approbation of the majority or not. I have looked at the subject with all the care and attention that are due to its importance; and I now feel myself bound to say, that, after consideration of every argument, and after examination of every document illustrative of the question, I am not yet satisfied of the justice of making any further concession; and that it is the firm and unchanged conviction of my mind, that the disabilities imposed on the Roman Catho-

lies, are not such as ought to be removed—and now I shall, with the leave of the House, proceed to state the circumstances and reasons on which I have grounded that opinion.

I had hoped, Sir, to have been able to abstain from any thing of a personal nature as far as I am myself concerned; but I think it necessary now to repeat, what I stated in 1825, that the Roman Catholics have no right whatever to urge their claims upon the ground of any thing contained in the treaty of Limerick. The House, Sir, will not think, called on as I have been by the honourable baronet (Burdett), that I trespass on them, if I renew the discussion as to the treaty of Limerick, in order to explain the sense in which I understand it. I shall advert, therefore, to those articles on which I found the conclusion I have already expressed, and I shall not wish to escape from the dilemma of the honourable baronet, if I do not show that there are good grounds for that conclusion.

Sir, there are various articles of the treaty of Limerick—the first, undoubtedly, refers to the condition of the Roman Catholics in general, *at that time*. It has been held, from its importance, to refer to granting the Roman Catholics certain privileges, which they, therefore, now claim, but which I deny that it gives to the Roman Catholics of Ireland. There are other articles in the treaty which refer to the inhabitants of Limerick; the second article refers to “all the inhabitants or residents of Limerick, or any other garrison now in the possession of the Irish, and all officers and soldiers now in arms under any commission of King James, or those authorized by him to grant, the same in the several counties of Limerick, Clare, Kerry, Cork, and Mayo.”

Now, Sir, I contend, that the first article of that treaty, confers no political privileges whatever; and those who signed that treaty, never contemplated conferring by it any political power or privileges whatever. The privileges supposed, were, securing to the Roman Catholics the free exercise of their religion, the preservation of them from any molestation on account of their religion, and that they should not suffer any disturbance on this account, nor be visited by

any species of punishment. But, I must contend, that the concessions to them of political power was never contemplated by the persons who drew up those provisions,—that the indulgences promised were never meant to extend to the enjoyment of political power; they were merely limited to such an undisturbed exercise of their religion, as they enjoyed in the time of King Charles the Second.

I beg leave, Sir, to call the attention of the House to the so much disputed construction of the verbal terms, in which that privilege was expressed. It has been argued, I know, that this article does not refer to the free enjoyment by the Roman Catholics, of their religion undisturbed, but what it confers on them, is the enjoyment of political privileges, and the eligibility to political power. But, Sir, I shall show the contrary, from the meaning assigned to similar terms—indeed, to the very identical terms, by the contemporary historians of the time—for instance, Lord CLARENDON, by whom they are always held to mean the undisturbed, unmolested exercise of religion, or, in the sense expressive of toleration alone, and independently of any implication of political power.

What, Sir, was King WILLIAM'S construction of those terms? In his answer to the letter addressed to him by the secretary of James, in favour of the Roman Catholics of Holland, he says, that he is willing to allow to the Roman Catholics the free exercise of their religion, but refuses to grant them any political privileges, or to allow them to have seats in Parliament,—evidently showing, that his Majesty understood by privileges, *not political power*, but the exercise of their religion. His Majesty expressed that determination in the very language which he used with regard to the articles of the treaty. He said, “their Highnesses think that more should not be asked, and that the Roman Catholics should content themselves by enjoying prosperity, and being secured in their persons and estates, and in the free enjoyment of their religion.” He said, “that they were not to expect to be admitted to Parliament, nor into office, but to have the free exercise of their religion.” He says,

first, "that the Roman Catholics ought to be satisfied with what they possessed, and not to be discontented on account of not being allowed to sit in Parliament, because the law did not allow them, and because, if they were to sit in Parliament, they would be enabled to overturn the Parliament." He goes on to say, "that, professing the Christian dispensation, they would not, therefore, on this account, judge it lawful to disturb the quiet of the realm."—(Hear, hear!)

These were King WILLIAM'S sentiments, Sir, and he plainly held that the Roman Catholics should be excluded from Parliament, and that the privileges which he intended to confer, and which he conferred on the Roman Catholics by assenting to the treaty, were only the free and undisturbed exercise of their religion. This view is confirmed by the debates which ensued in Parliament, where the matter was gravely discussed; and the legislature also held, that the treaty conferred only the free exercise of their religion, and not political power.

I beg the House to remark, Sir, that the treaty of Limerick was signed on October 3d, 1691, and on October 22d, 1691, an act passed concerning the Roman Catholics, which confirmed to them the enjoyment of their religion as in the time of King Charles, but excluded them from political power. On the 22d of October, the Parliament met, only a few days after the signing of the treaty, and then an act was passed, applying the same oaths of Allegiance and Homage in Ireland, as in England. There was no question in passing this act of the rights of the Roman Catholics, which were now claimed for them under the treaty of Limerick. The act was brought in by the parties to that treaty, and no question was ever made as to their right to impose those oaths. The act was frequently discussed—a conference took place between the Houses of Lords and Commons—no stipulations were then made in Parliament—and no attempt was made by those who were parties to that treaty, to confer political power, or political offices, on the Roman Catholics.

For upwards of one hundred years, Sir, this act has been

in force, and obeyed without exciting any remonstrances ; and who, I would ask, were the principal parties to that act? Sir, I am defending the Whigs of that day. At that very time, Lord Somers was Solicitor General, Treby was Attorney General, and Lord Godolphin was Lord Treasurer. Now, had King William and his Whig counsellors done so base a thing as was implied, in passing such an act in defiance of the stipulations of the treaty, could any thing have been more dishonest? Is it to be believed, Sir, that King William came down to the legislature to pass such an act in the face of his own treaty, and that Lords Godolphin and Somers acquiesced? I put it to the honourable baronet, if they had done so, understanding the treaty as he understands it, if ever a more gross violation of a treaty was inflicted on one of the parties?

After this act had passed, Sir, on February 24, 1692, King William ratified the articles of the treaty; and, in that ratification, he speaks of confirming to the city of Limerick, to the great satisfaction of the inhabitants, all their rights and privileges. And this took place on the 24th of February, one month after he had given his consent to an act of Parliament, which excluded the Roman Catholics from possessing seats in Parliament. Had he understood the treaty in the sense attributed to it by the honourable baronet, could he have added this solemn mockery to his violation of a positive agreement? This was the interpretation of the treaty by the Whigs of that period; and what says the Whig historian? Bishop Burnet says—"And thus ended the war of Ireland; and with that our civil war came to a final end. The articles of capitulation were punctually executed, and some doubts that arose out of some ambiguous words, were explained in favour of the Irish."

I take, then, Sir, my meaning of the first article of the treaty of Limerick from the interpretation put on it by King William III.—I take it from the interpretation put on it by the Whigs of that time—and I take it from the Whig historian; and by them all it is held to mean, *not political power or privileges, but freedom of religious worship.* On this

ground, then,—on these authorities—on Whig authorities, too—I feel myself bound to dissent from the assertions of the honourable baronet who opened this question, as to the conclusions attempted to be drawn from the imputed violation of the treaty of Limerick; and I am entitled to withhold my assent to the resolution proposed by the honourable baronet, as far as he claimed that assent on the ground that the treaty of Limerick conferred that political power on the Roman Catholics, it is the object of his resolution to confer. As far, Sir, as my assent to his resolution has been claimed on this ground, I think I have indubitably shown, that the treaty of Limerick does not justify the conclusion which has been drawn from it, by the advocates of the Roman Catholics.

I come now, Sir, to consider the question on its own merits. And I must confess, that any apprehensions I before entertained, from admitting Roman Catholics into the possession of political power—any unwillingness I before felt to listen to their claims—any alleged indisposition on my part to assent to the honourable baronet's proposition—I can assure him, that that apprehension, that unwillingness, that indisposition, have not been diminished by the quality of the language, and reasoning, in which this resolution has been proposed to the House, and the manner in which my assent has been asked. On the contrary, Sir, I do say, that the manner in which the honourable baronet introduced the subject to the House, has aggravated my apprehensions. The honourable baronet, in claiming our assent to this resolution, asserted, that he saw no difference in principle, between our present exclusion of the Roman Catholics from power, and burning a man at the stake! And my right honourable friend, the Attorney General for Ireland, (Plunkett) appealed to the House, as English gentlemen, if the people of England were, like the Roman Catholics of Ireland, excluded from political power, if they would not rise in arms for the recovery of their rights, and if they would not think themselves *justified* in rising in arms—(hear)—aye, *justified* in the act of rising in arms against the laws; or, if

they did not, if they would not think themselves unworthy of the name of Englishmen?

And, Sir, those gentlemen who advance these doctrines, which, above all, excite my apprehensions, do it, while they pronounce the exalted names, and profess to act on the principles of Mr. PITT and Mr. BURKE, who would have been the first to oppose such monstrous, such abominable doctrines—(cheers). It is at this moment, when the religious freedom enjoyed in England is greater than in any other part of the world—(hear)—that the honourable baronet puts forth these sentiments—when the King's Attorney General for Ireland appeals to the passions of the people—when such doctrines are broached by an honourable gentleman holding office in Ireland, I am not surprised at the existence of agitation and discontent, in the affairs of a country in which he presides.—(Loud cheers.)

Now, Sir, as to the use made by the honourable baronet of the authority of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Burke, I ask that honourable member, if he ever read the speeches of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Burke in 1790, when Mr. Fox brought in his bill for the repeal of the Test Act, or does he know that both those illustrious statesmen withheld their support from the attempted repeal? Mr. Burke vindicated his conduct on that occasion on the ground of objections to the principles of Dr. Priestley and other Dissenters. Mr. Pitt also repudiated their doctrines in still stronger terms, and opposed the bill by all the means in his power. And when, at a later period, Mr. Pitt advocated the Roman Catholic claims, he supported them on very different grounds to those stated by the honourable baronet and the right honourable the Attorney General for Ireland; nay, I contend for it,—Mr. Pitt rested his support of the measure on grounds different from any other that have been ever laid down in this House.

Sir.—What was the language used by Mr. Pitt, in 1805, after he had come to that conclusion in favour of the Roman Catholics on which so much stress was now laid?—a

conclusion, I must think, come to unfortunately,—as exciting in the Roman Catholics hopes that were liable to disappointment,—but founded on very different grounds from those on which it is now proposed to admit the Roman Catholics into political power. But, what were the words of Mr. Pitt on that occasion? These: “That is the ground (expediency) upon which I feel the measure ought alone to be discussed; for I cannot allow that at any time, under any circumstances, or under any possible situation of affairs, it ought to be discussed or entertained as a claim or question of right.” Mr. Pitt went on to say: “I, Sir, have never been one of those who have ever held that the term ‘emancipation’ is, in the smallest degree, applicable to the repeal of the few remaining penal statutes to which the Roman Catholics are still liable.” So that he not only took a very different view of the grounds on which he would proceed, but he discarded the name adopted by those who now quote him as an authority. Mr. Pitt also said: “I do not mean wilfully to shut my eyes to this conviction, that a Roman Catholic, however honourable his intentions may be, must feel anxious to advance the interests of his religion,—it is in the very nature of man; he may disclaim and renounce this wish for a time, but there is no man, who is at all acquainted with the operations of the human heart, who does not know that the Roman Catholic must feel that anxiety whenever the power and the opportunity may be favourable to him.” “With regard,” Mr. Pitt said, “to the admission of Roman Catholics to franchises, to the elective franchise, or to any of those posts and offices which have been alluded to, I view all these points as distinctions to be given, not for the sake of the person and the individual who is to possess them, but *for the sake of the public*, for whose benefit they were created, *and for whose advantage they are to be exercised*. In all times, therefore, Sir, and upon every occasion, (continued Mr. Pitt,) whether relating to the Roman Catholic or Protestant Dissenter, to the people of Ireland, or to the people of England, I have always, from a due regard to the Constitu-

tion, been of opinion, that *we are bound to consider, not merely what is desired by a part, but what is best and most advantageous for the whole.*"

This,—(continued the right honourable Secretary,)—this, Sir, is the principle on which I support the exclusion of the Roman Catholics (cheering). I would not make the Roman Catholic faith, or the religious opinions of any man, a ground of exclusion against him merely on their account; but, Sir, I am bound to consider, not only what they may suffer and what they may desire, but what will be good for the whole. I will not say I look on their exclusion as no evil: No; I admit it is one, and such an evil as I most sincerely wish we could remove, consistently with the safety of the State. But the removal of it is a question of degree,—a question of principle and of expediency, as to time and mode. Sir, I consider this question as yet open to discussion, notwithstanding the authorities quoted in its favour. And much as I respect and honour Mr. Pitt, my esteem for his judgment cannot master my own conscientious conviction; and I must say, dreading as I do some danger to the Constitution, from the admission of the Roman Catholics to political power, that I must differ from the opinion of the statesman whom I have quoted.—Mr. Pitt preferred securities to exclusion, while I prefer exclusion to securities (loud cheering).

Now, Sir, as to the allusion made to the influence of clamour out of doors, I never resisted the question on any ground like popular clamour. Whatever clamour may exist, it has had no influence on me, and it ought not to have any weight over the decisions of the House. And, Sir, if I thought any such clamour against it unfounded in reason, I trust the House would not suffer itself to be overruled by the public expression of prejudices—if any such prejudices exist in the public mind; and though I think the circumstance of satisfying the people of England an important element in the adjustment of the measure, yet, if I thought that measure of concession right and just in itself, I would expect the House to take the lead of the public sentiment.

Sir, I can say for myself—and my right honourable friend

has given me credit for this—that I have never encouraged the presentation of one petition, or in any way induced persons to send up petitions. I have thought it my duty to present petitions when sent to me, but I have never promoted petitioning. Neither do I resist this resolution from any doubt I entertain of the Roman Catholics from their conduct in former periods. I willingly discuss the question on the grounds taken by the honourable baronet; and I will not refer to past ages, but I will appeal for a decision to the good sense of the present times; and I will confine myself for illustrations to the present conduct of the Roman Catholics.

I must say, Sir, however, that my right honourable friend, the Master of the Rolls, (SIR JOHN COPLEY,) has not been fairly dealt with. He referred to the history of some past transactions, not to justify present exclusion, but to explain the grounds on which the Roman Catholics had been originally excluded. It is said, that the penal laws against the Roman Catholics are barbarous and severe, and my right honourable friend referred to the conduct of the Roman Catholics at former periods, to show that these measures were not adopted as measures of retaliation, but of safety.

Meeting the honourable baronet, therefore, as he desires, I must acknowledge that, *on Constitutional grounds, I feel a distrust of the religion of Roman Catholics* (loud cheering);—I repeat, Sir, on Constitutional grounds of public policy; for, as to the influence of his religion on the private Roman Catholic, I entertain as high an opinion for a Roman Catholic gentleman as I do for any member of society; and this sentiment I have proved by my conduct. I appeal to the House and the country, whether I have made any distinction, in my official communications, between the Roman Catholic and the Protestant. It is a matter of indifference to me, what particular doctrines a Roman Catholic believes as an individual—whether he believes in the doctrine of transubstantiation, or exclusive salvation, or any other. I do not quarrel with the religion of the individual Roman Catholic as a private subject; but when I see that, with that religion, as professed by millions, a plan of political influence,—a grand scheme of

human and of worldly policy,—is connected, I have a right to inquire into that scheme—I am surely justified in looking into the nature and extent of that influence, and to ascertain, if I can, what effect it is likely to exercise over the mind of man, and over society, and what will be its final result.

Can I doubt, Sir, that there is such a scheme engrafted on the Roman Catholic faith, and that it is more for the sake of this scheme than the doctrines that the religion is so much favoured? I cannot doubt, Sir, that it is the policy of the Roman Catholics to engraft such a scheme on their faith; nor can I doubt that that scheme is calculated and intended to enable man to obtain, acquire, and exercise dominion over the mind of man. Do I not see, that it confers indulgences, that it claims the power of confessing people, and granting them absolution; and, can I behold these doctrines without feeling, that the object of inculcating such religious tenets, is not so much the diffusion of a pure Christian morality, as the acquiring of worldly power for worldly purposes?

I say then, Sir, that the Roman Catholics are not excluded merely on account of their belief, for that is a private affair of the individuals; that it is not on account of their religion merely that they are excluded, but with that religion is connected a vast system of worldly power, which compels me to think they ought to be excluded from our councils. When I see it practically interfering with the political affairs of States—(hear)—that interference it is which compels me to enter into a close investigation of the nature and origin of that religious authority so misapplied. When these dangerous doctrines are sent out among millions of men, will it be denied, that they may be used for other purposes, than the diffusion of pure faith, namely, for the upholding of that spiritual authority of which some honourable members see only the departed shade?

Sir, when I see the Bulls of the Pope—the honourable gentleman laughs, (some member's smile attracted the right honourable secretary's attention,) but let him remember, that a Pope's Bull is of some importance among four millions of ignorant people, who have not had the advantages of an

education such as he received. Over them the Pope's Bull has a practical effect: and let me tell him, when I see this sort of influence exercised, I look with suspicion on the power which does it, and I trace in this act the still-living spirit of that power which has been said to be defunct and extinct.

Will it be believed, Sir, that in the year 1807, Pope Pius sent to Ireland, a—I will not call it *bull*, as the term may appear offensive to honourable gentlemen from the sister-country—(a laugh)—but a rescript, a declaration, stating that every Roman Catholic would be entitled to a remission of three hundred days' burning in purgatory, who would repeat, three times, the following prayer:—"Oh Jesus, Maria, Joseph, to thee I offer my ardent soul; oh Jesus, Maria, Joseph, hear my prayer; oh Jesus, Maria, Joseph, help me at my last hour." A remission of three hundred days in purgatory, for repeating that address, and this in the year 1807, in the enlightened nineteenth century! (Cheering loud and long.)

But this is mysterious, and may be explained away in a particular sense, exclaims some honourable member. Now, Sir, though this mysterious exemption from purgatorial flames is monstrous enough, I am still more disgusted by the attempt to explain or excuse such a doctrine, proceeding from rational and educated persons, and addressed to an ignorant and superstitious population of millions.

Sir, I ask any honourable member, when I see such a mockery of all religion sent forth, can I doubt whether it has any other object than the promotion of that worldly policy to which I have alluded. Can I doubt that it is intended solely to add to the authority of man over man; which, claiming a power to pardon him, grants the pardon on such ridiculous pretences, or withholds it, if the command is not obeyed. My right honourable friend may condemn me, perhaps, for ridiculing such superstitious ideas; but wherever free discussion is allowed, there is no fear that any ridicule will turn the really pious man from his religion; and I must think such attempts are in themselves only worthy of ridicule,

though I see they are only practised with a view of obtaining undue influence over the ignorant and credulous. These and other things of the same kind are, perhaps, trifles; but they are, as Lord Bacon says, "like straws thrown up in the air, they show the direction of the wind," and, from them, we may learn what is still the spirit of Catholicism.

Yet, Sir, my right honourable friend, (Plunkett,) the Attorney General for Ireland, censures the attempt at a reformation of that religion in Ireland, and ridicules the enlightened and excellent promoters of that most desirable reformation—(Loud cheering). Here in this House, enjoying the privilege of free discussion, my right honourable friend complains of the meritorious exertions of our clergy, to check the diffusion of such doctrines, and to counteract the influence of that religion, whose principal tendency is, a design to undermine the Church of England—(Hear). Sir, the exertions of the Protestant clergy in Ireland are not matter for wonder; they have been produced by the Roman Catholic clergy and the Catholic Association, whose designs they are calculated to counterwork. If the House has any doubt of the existence of a *political design* on the part of the Roman Catholic clergy, let them look to the writings of Dr. Doyle, who, according to my right honourable friend, is to end the polemical disputes in Ireland.

I must think, Sir, when I see that the spirit of this religion is altered in no degree, that there is great danger in admitting the Roman Catholics to political power. I repeat, that I quarrel not with the faith of individuals, but I entertain a well-grounded constitutional jealousy of granting them political rights. When I consider the influence exercised by the policy connected with the faith in different countries—when I see its effects in those countries where it is subject to restraints and controul—when I see the bigotry which belongs to it there—when I examine it in its various aspects in different countries where it reigns without a rival, and where it is kept in due subordination by a purer establishment, I can see nothing in it which calls on me to expose to the least danger the matured Church Establishment of this country.

It has been asked, Sir, whether we think it possible that Roman Catholics in the possession of political power, living under a free constitution,—contented and happy in a mild and liberal government, could be excited against such liberal institutions by the influence of their religion? We were told, a few years ago, that the influence of religion was fast dying away; and we were asked, with pity for our credulity, if we thought any men would now occupy themselves with religion? Religion, we were told, was, even on the Continent, only a volcano burnt out that could never be rekindled.

I remember, Sir, when Mr. Whitbread, in the course of an eloquent speech delivered in this House fifteen years ago, ridiculed the apprehensions that were then expressed as to religious feelings ever again exercising any influence over mankind. “Look,” said he, “at Paris: was there any fear that religion would be revived at Paris? Was it to be expected that Buonaparte would revive religion? Could he excite any apprehensions? Could the Pope excite any apprehensions? Why, he was Buonaparte’s prisoner, and must remain subservient to him! Was there any apprehension of the Jesuits being restored? He thought not. Atheism and indifference were the enemies they had to contend with.” If any individual had told Mr. Whitbread, at that time, that that religion would acquire the influence which it this day possesses in France, or could predict the various extraordinary occurrences in that country within fifteen years, and what had been done by the Bourbons, would he not have treated the prediction as a chimera, as wild as my right honourable friend has described the attempted reformation in Ireland?

How can I then forget, Sir, the influence of religion over the minds of men;—it is a natural weakness, and inseparable from the nature of man;—and I am sure that if the Roman Catholics were admitted to seats in this House, they would attempt to improve the condition of their religion, and to bring it closer to a level with the privileges of the Established Church, and who would restrict or prevent them? No man. I say, Sir, it is not in the nature of man, not to wish to see

that religion predominant which he himself professes; and if the Roman Catholics were admitted to share political power, they would, I think, exert it to exalt their religion; nor do I think, that the Roman Catholics could be admitted to seats in Parliament, without sometimes allowing an undue influence to operate on their minds, when legislating for the Protestant part of the community.

Sir, the destruction of the Protestant Establishment would not be the only, nor even the worst evil. The conflict for ages, before that object could be accomplished, would give rise to religious divisions and asperities, that would constitute a greater evil than the overthrow of the Church Establishment itself. But my right honourable friend tells me, that the granting of these claims will be the final consummation of all the hopes and wishes of the Roman Catholics. We are told, they will be perfectly satisfied with a measure that shall remove their civil disabilities, and opening to them the same offices, confer on them the same privileges as their Protestant fellow-subjects.

I have read, Sir, the declaration which, since the bill for the relief of the Roman Catholics was discussed in this House, has been issued by some of the most eminent and respectable members of their faith. But though that declaration was intended to convince me and other Protestants of the reasonableness of their objects, I have been unable to find in it that expression of entire satisfaction with the provisions of the bill, which my right honourable friend alleges was generally felt by the Roman Catholics. With this declaration, which was published in the year 1826, an address appeared "from the British Roman Catholics to their Protestant fellow-countrymen." In this address, which undoubtedly is very temperately worded, and proper in every respect, and well calculated to conciliate the minds of those to whom it is directed; but which is, at the same time, calculated to warrant an apprehension, Sir, that the mere removal of their present disabilities, is not the final consummation and end of all they intend to ask for, or calculate upon obtaining;—in this address they say:

“ We entreat you to endeavour to divest your minds of preconceived impressions to our disadvantage, and calmly to examine the situation in which we stand. In a country boasting of peculiar liberality, we suffer severe privations, because we differ from you in religious belief.” It then recites the disqualifications to which Roman Catholics are subject. “ A peer, for example, cannot sit and vote in the House of Peers; a Catholic commoner cannot sit and vote in the House of Commons; a Catholic freeholder may be prevented from voting at elections.” It goes on to complain that a Roman Catholic “ cannot hold any office in any of the corporations; he cannot graduate at either of the two Universities, much less enjoy any of the numerous beneficial offices connected with them, although both those seats of learning were founded by Catholics.” It further complains, that “ he cannot vote at vestries, or present to a living in the Church, though both of these rights appertain to the enjoyment of property.”

Why, Sir, some of these very disabilities, nearly all of them, I believe, which are comprised in this recital, were proposed to be continued in the bill of my right honourable friend himself, (hear). In that bill, if I remember right, there were special reservations with respect to the offices in the Universities, and as to the right of appointing to livings. Why, Sir, the attainment, then, of these objects, I must maintain, would be the natural and legitimate aim of the ambition of any Roman Catholic members who might sit in this House. And, if greater objects than these should arise—if views beyond those I have just mentioned should present themselves, could, or ought, we to complain if they confederated for their acquisition?

Honourable gentlemen speak of the fewness of their numbers with contempt; but I have had experience enough to know, that, under some circumstances, a very small party may, by dexterous management, possess itself of great influence over the House. I certainly believe that Roman Catholics, in the event of these disabilities being removed, would be found, some of them, ranged on the side of Government, and some on that of opposition. I make no doubt

that they would exercise, to a great extent, that freedom and diversity of political opinion, which my right honourable friend anticipates.

But, Sir, where the Roman Catholic religion might happen to be concerned, I believe that, as the East Indians unite, and as the West Indians unite—however opposed they may be at other times, and on other matters, to get a duty imposed, or a duty repealed, on sugar for example,—so the Roman Catholics would unite, on the very same principle, of community of interest or feeling, upon a question affecting their own faith. By this adroitness in trimming the balance between rival parties, and, by uniting themselves in exciting the religious apprehensions and feelings of their brethren in that faith, I do apprehend, that the Roman Catholics might exercise a very considerable power in this House over their own community; and to a great degree, although compared with the Protestant body, their number should be comparatively trifling, might succeed in the attainment of their ultimate objects, however extensive these might be.

Now, Sir, I conceive it evident, that it was this belief and impression which induced the legislature to interpose against the exertions of such influence, those guards which were created at the time of the Revolution. I am firmly persuaded, Sir, that, at that time, King WILLIAM and the great men who advised him, did make a clear distinction between the penal laws to which the Roman Catholics were then subject, and the laws which it was necessary to enact in order to resist the species of influence to which I have just adverted, and of which they were much more apprehensive than of the attachment of the Roman Catholics to the house of Stuart. They evidently thought, that they ought not to admit the Roman Catholics into the enjoyment of those offices, where the exertion of that influence might be rendered most effective, and could be most extensively felt. Accordingly, in the letter King WILLIAM wrote in 1697, he said, “I will give you every privilege I can, consistently with the free exercise of your religion, and every other privilege but that of admission to certain State Offices, and into Parliament; but I can-

not consent to admit you into Parliament, or to those offices which constitute the Executive Government, because I do believe, although I respect you, that you must exercise, as members of that Government, an influence to promote the views of the Roman Catholic body." So that, Sir, King William and his counsellors, when it was determined that the Crown should be Protestant, did not believe that the Crown would be safely secured in that succession, unless offices in the Executive, State, and seats in Parliament, were denied to those who professed the Roman Catholic faith.

This appears to me, Sir, the sound rule in a Protestant State like this, for I do believe, that a Roman Catholic must exercise his influence, under every government, in promoting his own religion. When I consider that it has been determined, that the Crown shall descend only to Protestant hands, I must frankly declare my coincidence in the opinion, that the security for the Establishment would be incomplete, unless the great Officers of State, and the Members of Parliament, are also Protestant. Suppose, Sir, the two Houses partly filled with Roman Catholics, and that the Sovereign himself should say he was convinced by the debates in the House of Commons, that there was no serious distinction between the doctrines of the Church of England, and those of the Church of Rome, the peace and tranquillity of the country might depend on the decision of a single man.

I must now, Sir, allude to by far the most important, and, certainly, by far the most painful topic connected with the question of this evening—I mean its bearing on the state of Ireland. Whatever may be my apprehensions or opinions, as to the ultimate consequences of the admission of Roman Catholics to offices in the Executive Government, and to seats in the legislature, I do not hesitate to say, that were I satisfied that the removal of these disabilities would have the effect which has been anticipated by some of the honourable gentlemen who have spoken on this subject, and would produce tranquillity in Ireland—I would sacrifice my apprehensions as to the ultimate consequences of the measure on the British Constitution, if I were certain of obtaining such an immense

advantage to the empire at large—I would not hesitate one moment, I say, to dismiss my apprehensions, if this great practical good might be accomplished by carrying the propositions of my right honourable friend into full effect. If this were, indeed, the course which would lead, as the honourable baronet (Burdett) opposite has eloquently expressed himself, directly to the Elysian Fields; or, if I believed, as my right honourable friend has described in his emphatic language, that the peace and concord of Ireland could for ever be maintained so perfectly, that as an honourable gentleman has observed, no man should hereafter inquire, “What is your religious faith? What is your particular creed?” I do not hesitate to say, that, in my desire to attain to such a state of things, I should not scruple to abandon all my fears, as to the future consequences of the measures which are proposed to us. But I cannot make up my mind, I own, that their effect—the effect of the repeal of these existing disabilities—would be such as my right honourable friend supposes,—that their removal, in short, would be that final and fortunate consummation to which he looks forward.

The honourable member for Armagh (Brownlow) says, that we are on the side of a fearful precipice—that our position is untenable—that we cannot remain where we are—that we cannot go back; and then he asks, “Why will you not go on and reach the top?” Why, Sir, if I were quite sure that we could get to the top of this precipice—or if I thought that were the top, which he points out as being such, I, for one, would not consent to remain where we are; I would willingly go on, if he could satisfy me that the summit was within sight—that when I ascended with him, a greater altitude would not yet rise above me,—“Alps on Alps arise,”—and leave me apparently further than ever from the eminence I sought to reach; and, if even we arrived at the top, that some larger and more beautiful horizon would burst upon our view, and gratefully reward us for our labour.

It is proposed, Sir, by my right honourable friend to retain the Protestant Establishment in Ireland, for a minority of the people, and on a very small scale. It is contended that

this might very well be done; and he puts the case of Scotland, and of other countries. And he says, "why will you not be satisfied that this may be done with the same good effects in Ireland, if you pursue there the same measures which have been taken in regard to those countries?" My answer to this question is, that with respect to Ireland, you do not mean to pursue the same measures. The case of Scotland is obviously not a case in point. If you said to me, "we mean to make the religion of the great majority of the people of Ireland, the religion of the State—we mean to confer the emoluments of the Protestant Church in that kingdom, upon the Roman Catholic Church, and to make provision afterwards for the ministers of the former;" I could then understand your proposal. But, Sir, if you mean to retain in Ireland the Protestant Establishment, in however a diminished state, simply as a bond of connexion between England and Ireland, I must fairly say,—although even I should subject myself to the imputation from my right honourable friend, of meaning to make the Establishment of the Protestant Church the only barrier between the Protestant and the Roman Catholic communities—I must fairly say, that I do not think your proposal will answer—I do not conceive that you will arrive at the consequences which are predicted, in respect of either of those communities.

Sir, I will here suggest a question to my right honourable friend—I will ask, when you have placed the Roman Catholics and Protestants upon an equality in point of law, do you really and fairly mean to admit them to an equality in point of actual enjoyment of offices? And, if you do, do you hope to see, at some future day, that state of affairs in which a Roman Catholic and a Protestant shall be administering, equally and conjointly, the concerns of a Protestant state; and a Roman Catholic shall be found as efficient and constitutional a minister of a Protestant Crown as a Protestant? If you do mean to say, that you look forward to this state of things—if you mean to give the Roman Catholics nominal equality, but feel it necessary, in respect of these offices, to provide for their practical exclusion, I say, Sir, that that

practical exclusion, coupled with that nominal equality, will be far more galling to them than any political disability under which they at present labour; because it will be an exclusion upon personal grounds, whereas, previously, they were those of the law. And if you do not practically exclude them, I think there will be such scenes of confusion, upon all occasions of local interest, at County elections, and other meetings—such an excitement of prejudices, and personal feelings, as will produce just as much irritation, and, in effect, work no more good than we at present witness in Ireland.

But I ask, Sir, will the friends of the Roman Catholic claims vindicate the right of the Roman Catholic Priesthood to the exercise of their spiritual authority now, and forbid it afterwards? My right honourable friend says, “they have only acted within the legitimate bounds of their province, upon recent occasions, and that they were only endeavouring to excite the Roman Catholic community to a sense of what he is pleased to designate deeds of patriotism!” He is the judge at present, and he styles it patriotism, because the Priests have required the voters to support those candidates who are friendly to the measures of which he is the advocate. But why, Sir, should not the Roman Catholic Priest hereafter claim to judge for himself what is patriotism, and retort upon my right honourable friend, that he was acting upon the same spiritual authority as before, and which he, therefore, could not deny? Patriotism!—and why? Because it makes, forsooth, for the bill of my right honourable friend!

Why, Sir, does any man mean seriously to vindicate what the Roman Catholic Priests did at the late elections in Ireland? It has, indeed, been said, that Protestant clergymen also interposed at elections in England. But can any honourable member, for a moment, pretend that there is any analogy between the exercise of that spiritual authority of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, endured at the recent elections, and any influence which the Protestants may have exercised? I have no wish, Sir, to encourage the interference of clergymen in electioneering scenes, but I am satisfied that no instance can be adduced, on the part of any

Protestant clergyman, in any county in Ireland or England, comparable to the excesses of the Roman Catholic priests. If any Protestant clergyman had advised the tenantry in his neighbourhood to fly in the face of their landlord, and, on the ground of religious opinions, had appealed to them as a matter of duty to vote against him, I ask, would there have been any end to the just denunciations that we should have heard in this House? Yet this practice has prevailed in Ireland to an extent utterly unjustifiable.

But, Sir, let us look at the whole question with openness and fairness. My right honourable friend has not only expressed unqualified approbation, but has openly asserted, in his place in Parliament, that the public tranquillity of Ireland, at this moment, depends upon the Priests. To this extravagant praise, I protest, I cannot consent. I have a great respect for their office. I do not wish to enter too minutely into their conduct and professions. But after such extraordinary adulation, let me ask this simple question. Has he not denounced, in the severest terms, the conduct of those agitators and demagogues, who, if their object be not to excite the people to actual rebellion, at least aim (according to my right honourable friend) to infuriate and exasperate them, in order to intimidate us into a concession of their claims?

If this, Sir, be a just character of the Irish demagogues, the simple question I will propound to my right honourable friend is, whether these Roman Catholic Prelates, to whose exertions he attributes the preservation of tranquillity in Ireland, have, in any public proclamation or authorized document, discountenanced the proceedings, or reprobated the conduct of those demagogues and agitators? Have they put down, or endeavoured to put down, the Catholic Association? Have they, or have they not, when the Catholic Association continued its sittings in Dublin, contrary to the prophecies of those honourable gentlemen who are the advocates of the Roman Catholic claims, and who so confidently told us, last session, that, upon the understanding that this question should be discussed now, there would be tranquillity in Ire-

land and submission to the laws ; have they, or have they not, discouraged or disavowed the measures of that Association ?

Again, Sir, I desire to ask my right honourable friend, do these Prelates belong to this very Association? Have they not subscribed to its funds? Are they not members of it? Sir, I am forced, perhaps with some reluctance, to make these inquiries ; because, when my right honourable friend requires me to believe, that the Roman Catholic clergy are the guardians of the public tranquillity in Ireland, and that this House should impose implicit confidence in their declarations, and appeals to me to give them mine, I beg to tell him, that he must not make an appeal to my generosity, and to my fears, at the same moment.

I cannot say, Sir, for I do not think, that the Roman Catholic Prelates have exerted themselves for the maintenance of the public peace of Ireland ; or, that they have put down the meetings of the Catholic Association, which took place in defiance of the reprobation of Parliament, and the expressed wishes of this House, that they should cease ; nor can I be persuaded, at the same moment, that the whole population of Ireland is banded together, from one end of the country to the other, in tranquillity or good order, by the influence or exhortations of these reverend persons. I cannot be so persuaded, Sir, while I observe that, of the Roman Catholic Prelates who have just now addressed a petition to us, no fewer than eleven are absolutely members of that Association, which has been described, in the course of this debate, as the centre and focus of all the mischief that agitates and afflicts Ireland.—(Loud cheering.) I should not have mentioned to the House this fact, if my right honourable friend had not pressed it upon my attention by the language he has held in respect of these individuals, and thus compelled me to inquire into the soundness of those almost exclusive pretensions, which he has put forward in their behalf.

If, Sir, the Roman Catholic Prelacy should seem to have acted with somewhat more consistency, as regards the agreements between the merits attributed to them, and the con-

duct pursued by them; if they would adopt a different line of conduct from that which they appear to have pursued, or my right honourable friend would say less of the measures they actually have adopted—upon the next occasion of presenting a petition from that body to Parliament, their representations would, undoubtedly, have a much greater effect upon the House, than they are likely to produce at present. If persons of their eminent rank and station, while signing declarations of this kind, of their entire respect for this House, and, above all, for the Protestant Establishment—if individuals occupying the positions they do, would abstain, whether led away by the angry feelings of religious animosity, or the bias of political prejudice—from putting their names to declarations, absolutely inconsistent with those laid before Parliament, their applications could not fail to carry with them much greater weight, and to command a much higher degree of credit. Why, Sir, I have here a letter, purporting to be written by Dr. Doyle, and couched in very extravagant terms of asperity, professing for himself the impossibility of subscribing to this respect for the Establishment declared in the petition, which is signed, among others, by that very individual. If the opinions expressed in either documents have not been sincerely avowed, by a gentleman in the capacity of a bishop, they ought not to have been recorded. If they are sincerely avowed in his letter, they are inconsistent with the declarations in the petition which he has subscribed.—(Hear, hear.)

Sir, I am perfectly satisfied, that nothing will have so much influence, or produce the same effect, on the people of England, as fair and open dealing. If the Roman Catholics deem it right to come forward with a declaration of their religious tenets, let them do so with sincerity. But I cannot avoid looking with inevitable distrust at professions and conduct so much at variance, the one with the other, as the conduct and professions to which I have alluded. The course I am following is one extremely painful to my feelings; but I have no choice.

When, Sir, the Petition from the Roman Catholic Pre-

lates was presented and read, my right honourable friend blamed every member who hesitated to believe their allegations. "What," said he, "will you not believe them?—There, they say, are their doctrines. Place implicit confidence in their declarations. How unjust and absurd to be ransacking the history of other times and places, while here you have their own express, unequivocal profession of faith." But when there are only thirty members in the body, the individual character of each is a matter of some importance.

I could not help smiling, Sir, when I heard the honourable member for Drogheda (Mr. Van Homrigh) relate the anecdote respecting Dr. Curtis, who, it appears to him, expressed himself in terms of great severity against the Association, and spoke two long Latin panegyrics on the character of the DUKE of YORK; one of which, I believe, was in effect,—*Animam qualem candidiorem unquam tulerit cœlum!* Certainly, Sir, after the abominable reflections that had been cast upon the character of that exalted personage, something was due from every Roman Catholic to vindicate himself from the reproach of sharing the feelings of the calumniator who had attacked him. But, if that was the object of Dr. Curtis, he would better have accomplished it by one speech, openly delivered, in the vulgar language, than by whispering two Latin quotations in the ear of the honourable member for Drogheda.

Sir, my right honourable friend (Plunkett) would have the petition of the Roman Catholic Prelates read, in order to put an end to all doubt, as to their belief and opinions. Their declaration was, in his view, something above all suspicion. It was with him an indubitable statement of the religious and political sentiments of the Roman Catholics.

I object, Sir, however, to the declaration contained in this petition, that it disagrees with the declaration sent forth by the Roman Catholic clergy. They state, that they publish it "in the simplicity of truth, as the doctrines of the Catholic Church had been frequently misunderstood, or misrepresented." In the declaration published, in 1826, it is stated,

that "the Catholic Church, in common with all Christians, receives and respects the entire of the ten commandments, as they are found in Exodus and Deuteronomy; the only difference between them lying in some points of construction." When I first read this passage, I exclaimed, "Then I, and many other Protestants, have been long in error, for I have always understood that the Roman Catholics did not recognize the second commandment, but excluded it from their Catechism."*

But, Sir, it happened soon afterwards that a catechism of the Roman Catholic Church fell into my hands, and then I was able to appreciate the "simplicity of truth" in which they had issued their declaration. This catechism, from which I am about now to read, is stated to have been revised by the Rev. Dr. Butler, and recommended by four Roman Catholic Archbishops; it is printed by the Roman Catholic printer to the Royal College of Maynooth, and is the 25th edition, carefully corrected. No doubt, Sir, therefore, can be attached to its authenticity. I turn to the Commandments, to correct my erroneous conceptions of the Roman Catholic system, and I find, that indeed the first Commandment is, in some respects, differently expressed, as compared with its appearance in Exodus and Deuteronomy. The second is, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain;" and the number ten is made out in this manner,—the ninth is, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife," and the tenth, "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods." It would be infinitely better, Sir, and much more to my satisfaction, if my right honourable friend had not called my attention to this petition. And I cannot help re-

* The Commandment which is excluded from the Roman Catholic Catechism is, "Thou shalt not make to thyself any graven image, nor the likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them; for I, the Lord thy God, am a jealous God, and visit the sins of the fathers upon the children, unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me, and show mercy unto thousands in them that love me and keep my commandments."

greeting this additional proof of the incompatibility of the fact with the profession of the Roman Catholic Church, and that my first suspicion was correct, viz.—that these petitioners *did not* approach the House “in the simplicity of truth.”

After this, Sir, let not my right honourable friend, for the future, challenge implicit confidence for any petition which he may present from that quarter. Whatever statements may accompany it, I shall regard them with suspicion. Their professed sentiments I, for one, must continue to contrast with their actual conduct: and, in opposition to this sort of test, it is in vain to refer me to this or that letter from Dr. Doyle, or the declaration of Dr. Curtis, when some other letter, or some other declaration, from the same party, might be adduced, of a totally opposite character. They will never again mystify me. And I cannot avoid expressing my participation in that feeling of disgust, which insincerity and attempts to mislead always excite in the minds of the English people. (Loud cheering.)

But, Sir, I have been asked, if then Roman Catholic Emancipation will be no remedy for the distresses of Ireland, what will? I answer, that I am sure the concession of the Roman Catholic claims would only excite greater dissensions, and inflame in a higher degree the spirit which now unhappily rages so strongly in that country. The system on which I have attempted to act, with perfect fairness and complete faith, has been, to institute an inquiry into every case of complaint, and, as far as it has been possible, to apply a remedy to every grievance.

Sir.—If it could be shown that I had ever culpably or negligently inflicted wrong on any part of the people of Ireland, or even on any individual, I should deserve to be viewed in a very different light. But I nevertheless do see myself, for it is a part of my painful duty sometimes to read the debates of the Catholic Association, loaded with personal abuse, and especially by one, (O’Connell,) who, considering some peculiar circumstances of a personal nature that have taken place, but to which I shall not now allude, ought not to indulge in the ceaseless torrent of calumny he

pours out upon me. I am charged with insulting the people of Ireland, and sending emissaries among them to excite them to rebellion! God knows, no man has adhered so strictly to his duty in this House as I have done, with respect to this question. Without exception, in every instance where my agency has been interposed, either in connexion with the duties of my office or otherwise, I never have, by language, doctrine, or example, directly or indirectly, contributed to the excitement of hostile feelings. My opposition has been confined within the walls of this House. Beyond these limits I have entirely forgotten the feelings which I entertain in the advocacy of this cause.

I appeal, Sir, to my right honourable friend, (Plunkett,) whether I have not cheerfully concurred in his endeavours to appease the people of Ireland. I have called upon the Protestants with this view, and conjured them to relinquish the gratification of their prejudices, to abstain from the commemoration of victories which must be painful to their fellow-countrymen. I have spoken to them thus: "Your forbearance can never be misunderstood; do not be ashamed of doing right, because you may be taunted with being afraid of celebrating what your ancestors so bravely have performed." In the administration of the Government of Ireland, I have never refused, but have, on the contrary, given my cordial concurrence to any measure of grace or favour calculated, consistently with law, to promote the interests of the Roman Catholics. In my correspondence with the noble lord (Wellesley) who presides over that country, to whose impartiality in the disposal of patronage and preferment, and to whose ability in discharging every duty connected with good government I am ready to bear testimony, I have also testified my concurrence in opening to the Roman Catholics of Ireland every privilege and indulgence to which they are by law entitled.

This, Sir, is the system upon which I have attempted to act with regard to Ireland. I have, on all occasions, endeavoured to do justice, and to give them the advantage of every privilege to which they are admissible by law. Fur-

ther than this—and this is to me a most painful avowal—I cannot consistently with my conscience, and my conviction formed after mature deliberation, consent, in the present state of things, to any concession.

I know, Sir, that it is possible, by legislation such as this country alone possesses, and with a government conducted on such principles as those which I have avowed, to obtain a ready obedience to the laws from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, so long as no delusion be practised to excite and misdirect their feelings. I am sure that the ill-advised proceedings of certain Roman Catholics of Ireland, will have no influence upon my mind, as to the opinion I shall entertain, and the course I shall adopt upon this question; for I have no fear of being induced to yield any thing to a system of intimidation. As individuals we ought not to regulate our conduct, or refuse to concede that which is just to any particular body, because a few or great number of designing men attempt to obtain by force, that which we refuse to argument. (Loud cheering.)

Depend upon it, Sir, the Roman Catholics of Ireland are wrong in thinking, that they can intimidate the people of this country. I much fear, that by the attempt to intimidate, they may raise up in this country an opposition to their claims far more formidable than that which they now experience. Notwithstanding the existence of such efforts, and whatever their temporary success, I cannot persuade myself to think it unreasonable to expect from the Roman Catholics of Ireland, a general deference to the laws, to the declared sense of the legislature upon this subject; and, at least, a passive acquiescence in the proceedings of an administration acting upon such principles as those I have alluded to, and in the prosecution of measures so directly framed for the amelioration of that country.

If, Sir, it shall be decided, that such is the prevalence of opinion in this country, and such the opinion of the House of Commons, that this system can no longer be maintained, I can only express my regret, and bow with deference to

the opinion of the majority. I shall, Sir, at the same time, put up an earnest prayer,—a most earnest supplication—that that majority may be right, and that I may be wrong; but I shall remain unconvinced. I can do no more than this; I have stated what I think to be the proper course for this country and the legislature to pursue. I think it prudent still to maintain the exclusion of Roman Catholics from the legislature, and those offices of state from which they are now by law excluded. I think it right, Sir, to continue the exclusion at the present point, because it is more than ever consistent with the settlement of the Constitution at the period of the Revolution; and because I think that the removal of the restrictions upon the Roman Catholics would not put an end to the evils under which Ireland suffers.

Under these circumstances, Sir, I must, painful as it is, persevere in the course of opposition I have ever pursued upon this subject, notwithstanding the difference which I thereby prolong with those for whom I entertain the most cordial respect, and with whom, upon every other subject, I believe, I concur in opinion. I have now discharged the painful duty which I owe to the House, I have felt that I had no other course than to state honestly, and I hope, without exaggeration or asperity, the opinion which I maintain—that which I have ever held, and which I now avow to be unchanged.

Sir, although I never adopted any opinion out of preference to another, in deference to great names or even to superior intelligence, yet the influence of either cannot be denied as a satisfaction to the mind in the maintenance of any disputed opinions. Within a short period, Sir, a great name and a great authority (EARL OF LIVERPOOL) has been lost to this cause; and while I lament—most bitterly lament—his loss to society, and to the cause which he so warmly espoused, I cannot but derive some consolation from the opportunity thus afforded to me of avowing my steadfast adherence to the sentiments which that exalted individual early adopted, and, to the last, entertained. I make this avowal

at a moment when I think it impossible that any human being can suspect me of the motives of adulation, or that my conduct is guided by views of personal advantage or aggrandizement.

The right honourable Secretary concluded midst loud and enthusiastic cheering :—the Motion was negatived by 276.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR JOHN COPLEY,

MASTER OF THE ROLLS.

SIR Francis Burdett having moved in the House of Commons, March 5th, 1827, “That the House is deeply impressed with the necessity of taking into its immediate consideration the present state of the laws by means of which their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects are affected with civil disabilities, with a view to their relief from the same,” and the discussion being protracted to a very late period, it was adjourned to the ensuing day. The House having accordingly re-assembled, March 6th, 1827, and the debate on the above motion being resumed, the right honourable and learned SIR JOHN COPLEY, MASTER OF THE ROLLS, and Representative for the University of Cambridge, delivered the following perspicuous Oration—replete with historical authority, argumentative eloquence, and zealous constitutional energy.

SIR.—As the Representative of a most distinguished and numerous body of constituents—the University of Cambridge—a great majority of whom feel intensely the importance of resisting any further legislative measure in favour of the Roman Catholics, I trust that I may be allowed to express my opinion on the subject. It is one which has been often, and deeply, and eloquently canvassed in this House; and I am apprehensive that I shall not be able to add much

to the arguments which have been urged with respect to it. But, Sir, I feel that I should be shrinking from my duty, that I should be deserting the post in which I have had the honour to be placed, if I did not state the grounds on which I conceive that I am bound to oppose the motion of the honourable baronet.

In the first instance, Sir, I congratulate the House most sincerely, on the tone of moderation and temper in which these discussions have been conducted. This is certainly, in a great measure, to be attributed to the admirable example which was set by the honourable baronet. Nothing could have been more proper—nothing could have been more judicious—than the spirit in which he introduced the subject to the consideration of the House. So much, so pre-eminently, do I estimate that tone and spirit, that I trust, in the whole course of these debates, in every stage of them, to their termination, the same temper will be invariably preserved.

Sir, we are standing on the brink of a great crisis. The eyes of the whole country are fixed upon us. The great mass of the Protestant population of the empire are looking anxiously for the decision of this night; the Roman Catholic population of Ireland are also awaiting it with an intense feeling—whatever may be the issue of our deliberations, whether it be for good or for evil, if that issue be the result of calm investigation, of fair statement, of unanswerable argument, and of full consideration, it will be entitled to the acquiescence of the country, which, I trust, it will receive.

With respect to the shape in which the question has been introduced, it is unnecessary for me to trouble the House with any observations upon it. From the honourable baronet's own speech, and from the whole course of the debate which followed, it is obviously intended that, in discussing the proposed resolution, the whole subject of further concession to the Roman Catholics shall be discussed.

For more than twenty years, Sir, has this subject agitated the empire. Abundant information has been obtained on the question. We now know what are the demands of the Roman Catholics, and we know upon what conditions they

are willing their claims should be entertained. They ask to be permitted to participate in the legislation of the country. They demand admission, with a very few exceptions, into all the high offices of government. That is the basis on which we are now to entertain the consideration of their claims. Upon that basis rests the propriety of the question, which we are now called on to discuss.

In one respect, Sir, our present condition is rather novel and extraordinary. We have had an additional evidence, in the course of the consideration which the question has elicited throughout the empire, of the influence of party feelings, to close the view and limit the vision to one part of any object which is under contemplation. One fact is beyond the possibility of doubt. The Protestants are put on their defence. They have been reluctantly placed in that situation—they are the parties accused—they are charged with every species of intolerance, of religious bigotry, of oppression; and these charges are preferred against them by the Roman Catholic portion of the community and their advocates.

Sir, when gentlemen tell us of the laws which have been passed, onerous to the professors of the Roman Catholic religion—when they complain of the severity of those laws, they carefully keep out of view the necessity which caused their enactment; or, if they touch upon it, they touch lightly. That course is, towards this House, highly mischievous—it is false and deceptive. Are the feelings of reverence, with which we regard the acts of those who have gone before us, to be outraged by our being told, at this time of day, that our forefathers were oppressors, and had proceeded in those enactments, which have so long been considered the bulwarks of our civil and religious liberties, without adequate cause? Are we now, after twenty years' discussion, to be told, that men of great knowledge, of unimpeached integrity—the warm lovers, the most ardent friends and champions of constitutional liberty, were bigots, persecutors, intolerants, oppressors?

Without uttering one word, Sir, calculated to excite bad feelings, I will, with the permission of the House, review

some of the circumstances, under which certain of those so-much-complained-of statutes became the law of the land. If we advert to the reign of Elizabeth, I ask, does any man suppose that the laws against professors of the Roman Catholic religion, which were then enacted, proceeded on speculative conjecture, on imaginary apprehensions, on suggestions of invention? Is it not, on the contrary, well known, that those laws were enacted for the express purpose of keeping the Roman Catholics of that day in subjection; a body, who, if they were not kept in subjection, and effectively controuled, would have overborne and oppressed the Protestants to an extent far beyond all that can now, with any show of truth, be imputed to the Protestants of the present times. The legislators of that day had been close observers of what had recently occurred during the short dominion of the Roman Catholics in the reign of Mary. They had been all of them actors, and some of them sufferers, in that period of horror. They lived in that age when bigotry and intolerance were triumphant—they were spectators of the frightful scenes enacting in France; the horrible atrocities perpetrated there, and also in the Netherlands, were before their eyes, or fresh in their remembrance. The power of the Roman Catholic religion of that day was seen in the full force of its arbitrary and tyrannical character. And, the Roman Catholics of that period were, day by day, endeavouring to undermine and to overthrow the government of this country; and in connexion with one of the most despotic and bigoted governments that ever existed in the world—that of Spain—to re-establish the system which had already proved so hostile to our liberties. To guard against the recurrence of evils, the most intolerable by which society can be afflicted, our forefathers enacted the laws against the Roman Catholics.

I will now, Sir, pass to the period of James, when laws were enacted imposing upon Roman Catholics the oath of allegiance and other oaths; not for the purpose of wounding their feelings, or insulting their honour, but in consequence of an attempt which I will not describe—of a character so atrocious and horrid, as to be almost incredible, were it not

for the clear evidence on which its truth was incontestably established; and yet, with necessities such as these, pressing upon the condition of our ancestors, they are charged with intolerance and bigotry, when they merely proceeded on principles of self-defence.

From this period, and this country, I will pass to an earlier day, and to another land. I will refer you, Sir, in justification of the Protestants who are charged with bigotry and intolerance, for having passed the laws respecting the Roman Catholics—to the occurrences in Ireland, in the reign of Charles I., in the year 1641, when insurrection and massacre deluged, I may say, that unhappy country with blood, and occasioned scenes of devastation and horror more extensive than the imagination of man is capable of conceiving. Is it wonderful that with such scenes before them, and witnessing the persevering attempts which were made by the Roman Catholics of that period to obtain predominance, men attached to the laws—men of upright and honourable minds—men imbued with the principles of statesmen, should feel themselves imperatively called upon to enact laws—of severity if you will—but laws which were calculated to repress the evil of which so just an apprehension was entertained.

I will now, Sir, with the permission of the House, revert to the period of the Revolution, when in consequence of various schemes which were evidently concerted for the purpose of introducing the Roman Catholic religion into the country, and just as some of those schemes, that excited well-founded and extreme alarm in the mind of every Protestant, were ripe for execution, James the Second was driven from the throne. It was then that our ancestors made a noble stand for maxims that we should never desert nor disown—it was then, that our constitution was established on principles as free as ever distinguished a political institution.

Why, Sir, have I adverted to these facts? God forbid that I should ascribe to the Roman Catholics of the present day, principles such as these, which are known to have been professed and acted upon by the Roman Catholics of the seventeenth century. The sole object which I have had in

view, has been to show the foundation of the laws by which the Roman Catholics have been at various times restrained. From the Revolution down to the present period, those laws, as far as they related to political power, have been gradually diminished in severity. Many of the oaths by which persons, professing the Roman Catholic religion, were prevented from enjoying various civil advantages, (oaths highly proper at the time at which they were enacted,) have been abrogated.

It is most material, Sir, that we should distinguish between what we are called upon to do, and what we are not. We are not called upon to repeal laws which proscribe the persons, confiscate the properties, or controul the consciences of our fellow-subjects. We are called to confer political power on a class, whose principles, experience has taught us, are adverse to liberty and constitutional government. The laws, which, if existing in the present day, might justly be esteemed oppressive and severe, against persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, have, every one of them, long since been abrogated. We are not, therefore, as has been most incorrectly stated, called on to repeal penalties, and remove disabilities, but to consider a question of mere policy, a question of expediency. The question is, whether we shall take that one further step which the honourable baronet advocates? Can we, in common prudence, admit into political power, persons professing the Roman Catholic religion? It is replied, that they are already in possession of political power, and that reply, I regret to say, is already too extensively founded in truth.

Then, Sir, the question is not whether we shall admit them into any degree of political power, but whether we shall elevate them into legislators, and into the high and responsible offices of the state? I repeat, Sir, that it is entirely a question of policy and expediency. I must freely and cordially acknowledge that, if Roman Catholics can be admitted into the legislature, and into the cabinet, with safety to civil liberty, and security to the Protestant religion and establishment, they are entitled to such admission. I discuss this subject on no narrow grounds; on no bigoted

principles. Prove to me that what the advocates of the Roman Catholics propose to be done, may be accomplished with perfect security to ourselves, and no individual would more strenuously endeavour to remove the exclusion of which they complain, than he who now has the honour of addressing you.

We have been told, Sir, and certainly with some plausibility and appearance of truth, of the great constellation of men of genius, talents, experience, and statesmen-like minds by which the cause of the Roman Catholics has been supported. I confess, Sir, that when I contemplate all the circumstances which have attended that support, I do not feel oppressed by the authorities to which allusion has been made. On the contrary, I trust I shall be able to satisfy the House—I am sure I have satisfied myself—that the great and distinguished authorities which have been cited, are every one of them on my side, and would have concurred with me to-night, in the view which I am taking of this important question.

We are told, Sir, that, in resisting concessions to the Roman Catholics, we are opposing ourselves to the doctrines and principles of Mr. Pitt. I well remember a speech in this House of that eminent individual, in which one of the prominent topics was, that the Roman Catholic claims could be more easily carried into effect as a step immediately consequent upon the Union with Ireland, than under any previous condition of the two countries, and for this reason, that the proportion of Roman Catholics would be so much less in the United Parliament, than could have been in that of Ireland previous to the Union. But, Sir, I also remember that, in terms too clear and explicit to admit of mistake, Mr. Pitt added, that he could concede their claims to the Roman Catholics only on what he should be satisfactorily and firmly convinced, were sufficient and adequate securities—securities that should place beyond risk the Protestant religion and establishment—security against domestic efforts directed to its subversion—security against any species of foreign influence—security against the effects of the united and com-

bined spirit by which it was known that Roman Catholics were actuated.

This was the language held by Mr. Pitt ; and I find that great statesman's opinion confirmed by the authority of my Lord Grenville. That noble lord declared, that we must have adequate security for the Protestant religion against foreign influence. What was the security which was present to the mind of Lord Grenville, and without which he would not accede to the Roman Catholic claims ? The Veto ; the investing of the crown with a veto on the appointment of Roman Catholic bishops. Sir, I do not say that was an insufficient security. I do not pronounce an opinion on its adequacy, or inadequacy, in any form ; but I am now contending for the principle of securities, and I merely mention the fact incidentally, to show that Lord Grenville took his stand upon the understood principles of security, and that, unless Parliament could be satisfied of the adequacy of that security, the noble lord was prepared to resist concessions in every form. When I am told, therefore, that Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville are great authorities against me, I deny it ; because the only ground on which either of those statesmen expressed their readiness to acquiesce in the Roman Catholic claims, was a distinct understanding that sufficient security should be afforded to the Protestant religion and establishment.—(Cheers.)

There is another name, Sir, that has been frequently alluded to, an individual of unimpeached political integrity, of great enthusiasm, of distinguished eloquence ; I mean the late Mr. Grattan. Now I refer with confidence to the opinion of Mr. Grattan ; for there exists not the shadow of a doubt, that, upon investigation, he will be found to profess the same doctrines as Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville, namely, that adequate security for the Protestant religion was indispensable, and that the danger of foreign influence should be scrupulously guarded against. I have a paper lying before me, to which I would particularly refer, were it not that I do not wish to trespass upon the patience of the House, in which Mr. Grattan declares, that when the Roman Catho-

lics ask for political power, the Protestants have a right to demand securities, and unless adequate security be given, the Roman Catholics can set up no just title to political immunities. So much for the opinion of Mr. Grattan.

The authority of a noble lord, Sir, now no more—I mean the late Marquis of Londonderry—has been frequently referred to as hostile to the views of those who have felt it their duty to make a stand against concession. The authority of that noble lord in this House—the influence which he enjoyed and exercised—the personal regard with which he universally inspired his colleagues and associates, will not readily be forgotten; still less is it likely to be forgotten, that there never was an individual more hearty and zealous in support of Roman Catholic claims, than the late Marquis of Londonderry. But what, Sir, was the language which he uniformly held? “We must have security—not the security of oaths alone—we must have real power, real substantial security, against foreign influence, and the peculiar tenets of the Roman Catholic faith.” I have now done, Sir, with deceased authorities. Of all the use which I could have desired to make of them, it has been fully in my power to avail myself.

I now come, Sir, to our own times, and to the individuals alive and amongst us, who have advocated the Roman Catholic claims. I come to my right honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Mr. Canning), who adorns this House, and whom I rejoice to meet here in renovated health. I am sure that my right honourable friend's candour and love of truth will induce him to allow that he has repeatedly, I may say over and over again, declared in this House, that he could never think of making such concessions to the Roman Catholics as would invest them with political power and authority, unless he felt fortified the security against foreign influence was most ample and satisfactory.

From this great authority, Sir, I pass to my right honourable friend, who, on a recent occasion, so splendidly distinguished himself—I mean the Attorney General for Ireland

(Mr. Plunkett). At what period of his political life did he ever sanction concessions to the Roman Catholics, upon any other terms than those contended for by the other great names to which I have referred? Has he not uniformly called out for security? Has he ever ceased to maintain that the Protestant religion and establishment should be protected? Who, then, will question that these authorities are of the greatest weight, and that the individuals now existing, who have expressed the opinions that I have quoted, are for ever disabled from dispensing with securities, without contradicting their pledges? They are unavoidably bound, if they be consistent, to take the same view of the subject that I have felt it my duty to present to the House, and to resist to the utmost every claim of the Roman Catholics, except upon the principle of security.—(Loud cheering.)

May I now, Sir, be permitted to refer to the history of the securities, or rather to the vain and delusive offers of security with which the confidence of Roman Catholic advocates has from time to time been abused; and let us see whether they were really sincere when they declared their readiness to give security. Let us, from the year 1808, down to the present time, fairly, impartially, and candidly consider the subject of securities; and if we can lay our hands upon our hearts, and say that we truly believe they have evinced any sincere disposition to meet the Protestants, and to give that security, without which political power can never be safely conferred on Roman Catholics?

What, Sir, are the facts? In the year 1808, a proposition respecting securities was offered by the Roman Catholics. Mr. Grattan came down to this House, and stated that, in consequence of communications which he had with some of the heads of the Roman Catholic religion, he was prepared to offer, on their behalf, such securities as would take from the concession of their demands, all the danger that the most timid could apprehend. A measure founded on that principle of security was introduced; but a very short time had elapsed before Mr. Grattan was compelled to declare, in his place in Parliament, that the authority with

which the Roman Catholic Prelates had invested him, to speak their sentiments on their behalf, had been withdrawn. "When last I had the honour of addressing the House," said Mr. Grattan, with that warmth of feeling which was peculiar to him,—“when last I had the honour of addressing the House in behalf of the Catholic claims, I then stated that the Catholics were willing to concede to his Majesty, the right of veto on the Catholic nomination of their Bishops. I am sorry to say, that I cannot now affirm that such are the sentiments of the Roman Catholics of Ireland upon that subject. Whether I have misinformed the House, or the Catholics have been guilty of retraction, is a question which I shall never agitate, it being my fixed principle never to defend myself at the expense of my country.” The circumstances under which this retraction occurred, I will by and by bring under the consideration of the House.

Having, Sir, detailed the particulars of their first retraction, I shall now bring under the consideration of the House the next circumstance in which the expectations of their friends were disappointed. In the year 1813, Mr. Grattan, in conjunction with my right honourable friend (Mr. Canning), brought in another bill, founded on principles of security, connected with the appointment of the Roman Catholic Bishops, giving the same veto to the crown, and the same controul to the government, in that appointment. It was declared by them, that this was the only security they had to offer; that they considered it ample and sufficient; and that it was only in consideration of that security, they would recommend the adoption of the measure. Through every stage of that bill, did the Roman Catholic Bishops permit Mr. Grattan to speak in their name and their behalf. But before the bill had gone through its respective stages, when the measure was on the point of completion, what was the event? The Roman Catholic Bishops held a meeting, in which they condemned the proposed concessions; when they retracted, alleging, that the veto would place them in a worse instead of a better position; and would revive all the evils of the Penal Laws in their most intolerable shape. In

consequence of their refusal to adhere to the pledge which they had thus a second time given, the measure was lost in this House, and the Roman Catholics of Ireland were left in the same state as before. Having stated so much of the history of securities, I will, passing over the intermediate period, come down at once from the year 1813 to 1825, in order to show that the Roman Catholics of the present day have, not only no greater disposition than their predecessors to give the securities which are required of them, but when I think it will be most evident that they then evinced a determination to give no security whatever.

Sir, let us not be charged with bigotry and intolerance, when we say, that we are willing to admit the Roman Catholics to political power, if we have sufficient security that we can do so without danger to the State, or detriment to the Constitution; for such is the language that has been held by all the illustrious men who have discussed the subject. If I can satisfy the House that there is no disposition or inclination on the part of the Roman Catholics to concede any securities, what right have they to complain of us for refusing to concede their claims? The pledges which they have repeatedly given, they have as repeatedly forfeited. And, I will ask, are we not bound to act with extreme caution when we find them slipping out, one after another, from the pledges they had given, in the expectation, probably, that when the legislature and the government are no longer able to resist them, all will be granted without qualifications, and their claims acceded to on their own terms?

The discussion of 1825 must be fresh in the recollection of all who hear me. It is now known, Sir, that the securities then talked of were perfectly delusive. New securities were, at different times, proposed, and alterations made in them, as must be known to every gentleman having any thing like a competent acquaintance with the subject. Why, Sir, without adverting further to the alterations and omissions made in these proposed securities, I will take the liberty to allude to one which never could have been the result of accident or inadvertence. I mean that most remarkable difference which

occurs in the wording of the oath proposed in the bill of 1825, to be in future administered to Roman Catholics,—that most remarkable omission, as contrasted with the oath of 1793. In the oath imposed by the Act of 1793, there is a clause, which makes every Roman Catholic, who holds a place under the operation of that statute, bind himself in the most solemn manner that he will not do, or attempt to do, anything calculated to alter, or interfere with, the established and existing condition of property in Ireland. Sir, is it not a little strange that this provision, so necessary in consequence of what is now known with respect to the hopes of the Roman Catholic party,—so indispensable to the well-being of the State, and which forms the most important and vital part of the oath of 1793, should, in 1825, be wholly omitted. (Loud cheering.)

Sir, in the oath of 1793, are these remarkable words:—“ I do swear that I will defend, to the utmost of my power, the arrangements of property within this realm, as established by law.” This is the provision, and the necessary provision, contained in the oath of 1793. Every body who knows anything of the history of Ireland; every body who knows anything of the proceedings upon this question, or of the evidence given before a committee of this House, as well as before the House of Lords, must feel most sensibly how important is the provision contained in this oath. Are we not aware that that oath was admitted, at that period, as an additional security to the Protestant Church? If that were a necessary clause and provision in the oath of 1793, why was it then omitted? Again,—I say, will not the House be astonished to learn that, in the bill of 1825, the whole of this provision was omitted? Was the omission made advisedly and deliberately? Was it merely the effect of accident, or of indifference; or was it the result of deep-laid design? I think there is no manner of doubt, that this can be considered only as a deviation of Roman Catholic professions. If so, I ask, where is the power, or the wish, on their part, to give us the additional security which we are entitled to demand?

I will now, Sir, advert to another circumstance, and direct the attention of the House to a different part of the oath—by which it was provided, that the person accepting office should swear as follows:—“ I do solemnly swear, that I will not exercise any privilege, to which I am or may become entitled, to disturb and weaken the Protestant Religion and Protestant Government in this kingdom.” Immediately after this oath was published and circulated, a Roman Catholic Commentary was also published and circulated. By this commentary it was endeavoured to show, that the oath would not be violated, if both the conditions were not broken. So that, according to this interpretation, you must not “weaken” by means of disturbing, but you may weaken by any other means in your power. By this Jesuitical interpretation, it was meant to convey to the Roman Catholics, that except they disturbed, as well as weakened, the Protestant Establishment, they did not break their oath; and it was added, “ if this is not the meaning of this provision, the stipulation cannot be admitted.” What will the House think, when I inform it, that, in the oath proposed in 1825, its framers, taking, no doubt, the hint contained in the ingenious Commentary of 1793, had entirely omitted the word “weaken.” Should we, out of deference to the feelings and prejudices of the Roman Catholics, when we call upon them to give us security, omit from the oath a stipulation that is an essential foundation for our security? (Loud cheering.)

Having, Sir, called the attention of the House to this material omission, I shall pass over the other less important omissions. This was the oath. What additional security was it proposed to afford the Protestant Establishment in Church and State? Something was said with respect to the Roman Catholic Bishops, and a certificate of loyalty; but this was after the election. Sir, is there any human being who does not feel the entire ridicule of such a proposition?—is there an individual, who acts upon the principle that security is essential or necessary, that can consider this offer as an adequate security to us Protestants against the justly dreaded dangers of foreign interference? To guard against the

indignity, the perils of foreign interference, and foreign correspondence, what is the security offered? None whatever, except that the correspondence between Ireland and the Papal See, should undergo the supervision of the Roman Catholic bishops. These were the securities proposed to be afforded us by the bill of 1825.

It may be said, it is unfair for me to enter now into a discussion of the merits or demerits of that bill. Sir, I have no such intention, and I am not doing so. But I feel I am entitled to say, that that bill, which had received the utmost care and consideration of the Roman Catholics and their advocates, may be considered as containing all the security in their power to offer. What, then, shall we say, when we find this to be their *ultimatum*? Am I not authorized in declaring, that they have it not in their power to give us Protestants any adequate security for the concessions sought to be obtained? Is it necessary to go into a laboured and lengthened detail on this subject? I think not.

The Roman Catholics now, Sir, call for a simple repeal of the disqualifications under which they labour, and an unqualified admission to the full rights and privileges of the Constitution. At first, they approached us with a modest and temperate demand; they were willing to obtain their object by giving the government any security that was not actually at variance with the essential doctrines of their religion; but, now that they have arrived at their full-grown strength, and setting us at defiance, they require that as a right which they had previously sought as a favour. This they do, Sir, without offering us any adequate security for the boon. I repeat, when we enter into a careful examination of what they demand, it will be found to be neither more nor less than an unqualified and simple concession on our part, without any sufficient security on theirs. Their doctrine and principle is this:—"We, on one side, require from you a full participation in all the privileges of the Constitution, while we are unwilling to concede any thing to you in the shape of security."

I heard last night, Sir, the honourable member for Dublin

(Mr. Grattan) appeal to the petition of the Roman Catholic bishops that was laid on the table of this House. I look to the language of that petition, and I entreat that honourable member to examine what they require of us to grant them. Is it not simple, unqualified, unconditional concession? They demanded a full and equal participation in all rights and privileges, and they held, that unless we went to the utmost length of these concessions, we, in fact, conceded nothing. Even the great and splendid authorities which have been appealed to,—can they be made use of against us on this occasion? Our adversaries assert, that it is sufficient for them to say, that we have all the talent and authority of the country against us. I say this is not the case, when we come to sift and examine the question. For, the great authorities alluded to have, over and over again, avowed the only principle on which they advocated concessions,—namely, the principle of the Roman Catholics giving full and adequate securities.

Perhaps, Sir, it will be said—I have no doubt that it will be urged—that we ask the Roman Catholics to do that which is totally inconsistent with their religion. It will be argued, that they cannot afford us the security we require, without undermining the principles of their religious faith—that they cannot accede to the bill of 1813. If this be true, it is really a most extraordinary circumstance—a circumstance totally inexplicable to me. Is it not a most extraordinary fact, that in the year 1814, after the decision of this House had been declared upon the bill of 1813, the person who at that period exercised the authority of the See of Rome, upon being applied to on the subject—the first authority then existing—the individual, under whose jurisdiction and spiritual controul the Roman Catholics of Ireland were at that moment placed,—that individual did, in the most distinct and positive terms, publicly declare, that there was nothing objectionable in the Veto, and that there was nothing in the bill of 1813 at all inconsistent with the principles and exercise of the Roman Catholic religion?

But, Sir, it was singularly contended by the Irish Roman Catholic bishops, when that opinion was communicated to

them, that the Pope at that period was in his confinement, and they protested against the authority of the person I allude to, who acted in his place, for having, in this instance, they stated, very much overstepped all legitimate limits. To confute that argument,—to answer that objection,—I have only to call to the recollection of the House, that the same proposition was stated in detail by the Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland to the Pope himself, in the year 1815, and his Holiness confirmed the opinion given in the preceding year. The Pope had unequivocally declared, that there was nothing in that concession which he deemed inconsistent with the tenets and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. Is there any body who has attended to the history of these proceedings—is there a man who is acquainted with the facts and circumstances of the case, that can deny what I have stated? I have a letter addressed upon the subject by the Pope, amongst the papers now near me, and I could refer to it, if what I have asserted were not a matter so notorious as to render any such reference idle and unnecessary.

Let us, Sir, advance one step further. What takes place in other countries relative to this point will afford the most valuable positive evidence upon the subject, and the strength of this testimony will be greatly increased by connecting it with what I have just stated, with respect to the concessions of the Pope in 1815. Let us examine the situation of Roman Catholics on the continent of Europe, and having done so, recur to the condition of the Protestants there. Who appoints the Roman Catholic bishops of Silesia? Does the Pope? Does even a Roman Catholic Sovereign appoint them? No; they are appointed solely and entirely by the King of Prussia. Why should not the Roman Catholic bishops of Ireland be equally appointed by their Protestant Sovereign? Oh, no: in Ireland this is deemed totally inconsistent with the principles of the Roman Catholic religion! In Russia, the only Roman Catholic bishop, possessing authority in the empire, is appointed by the Sovereign. In addition to these important facts, I can state that, both in Russia and Prussia, the whole correspondence that passes

between the Roman Catholics of these countries and the See of Rome is under the supervision of Protestant authorities. Don't tell me, then, that such concessions are inconsistent with the spirit, the principles, or the practice of the Roman Catholic religion. (Loud cheering.)

True it is, Sir, they may be inconsistent with the exclusive domination which it is the object of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Ireland to maintain over the people, and subversive of the bondage, in which it is no less the desire of the lower order of the Priesthood to keep them. This influence and sway so marvellous and extraordinary as to excite the astonishment of the Attorney General for Ireland, than whom no man is better acquainted with the facts of the case, may be considerably impaired by the concessions alluded to. For the purpose of maintaining, unbounded and unbroken, the allegiance of the people to the Pope and the Priesthood, they have refused, at last, all further concessions, and left us in the situation in which we now stand. The Roman Catholic religion has been ever intolerant; and will any man pretend to tell me that its character is now changed?

Sir, is there anything in the immediate state of Europe, and in the situation in which we now stand, as contrasted with that of 1810 or 1815, which would render the security that was necessary then, unnecessary now. I beg the attention of the House to this point. At the period of the peace and treaty of 1815, the Roman Catholic religion and influence of the Papal See were in a state of the most abject prostration. If there ever existed a period when we might have dispensed with securities from the Roman Catholics it was at that peculiar juncture of affairs. But even at that period the advocates of the Roman Catholic religion thought the securities essential. How different is the present period! How much more pregnant is it with danger and with just causes of alarm! Since the year 1814 we have found the Roman Catholic religion and the Papal See struggling actively and incessantly for power throughout every part of Europe. In every corner of Europe we find a state of excitement; and what is most extraordinary and marvellous is, that whilst the

advocates of liberal principles and liberal feelings in this country are defending the claims and pretensions of the Roman Catholics, the advocates of liberal principles upon the continent, who see what is going on, are alarmed and suspicious, and apprehensive of our proceedings in their favour. (Cheering.)

Let us only advert, Sir, to what has recently occurred in the South of France. I refer to the year 1814, when the spirit of Roman Catholic persecution burst forth against the Protestants. This is most important to consider—for the Roman Catholics under the previous government of France, that of Napoleon, had every inducement to be liberal, and none whatever to acquire a spirit of intolerance and persecution. I ask the House to bear in mind the circumstance alluded to by the honourable member for Corfe Castle (Mr. Bankes)—the restoration of the Jesuits, and the active manner in which they are engaged pushing forward their course in every state on the continent of Europe. (Hear.)

I recollect having, Sir, many years ago, read a popular work, "The History of the Order of the Jesuits;" and I also recollect that, at that time, I felt the utmost astonishment, how the world could ever have been so formed, as to tolerate or submit to such an institution. Little did I then think, that ere a few years should pass away, I should see the same most odious order revived. It is unnecessary for me to speak of the dangerous tendency of an order, which requires in every individual member of it, complete, blind, and implicit obedience to the commands of the superior, without any attempt on his part to question their justice. That order is now spreading over every corner of continental Europe, and acting in secrecy, and in vigour, to obtain their former power and controul over private conduct and public proceedings, without any responsibility to the government of the countries where its influence prevails.

Sir, under these circumstances, my argument is this, if securities were necessary for our Protestant Establishment in 1813—the advocates of the Roman Catholics admitted that they were—do not the facts to which I have alluded render

such securities equally necessary at the present moment? I know, Sir, that at this moment the Jesuits are employed in conducting the education of youth throughout different countries. This alone is sufficient to form a foundation of their future absolute power. Who can view the artful and insidious, the criminal and daring conduct of the Jesuits in France, in order to re-establish their sway—who can contemplate the encouragement given to them in that country, and say that the Protestant Church can dispense with her legitimate means of defence—the right to demand securities from the Roman Catholics ere any concessions be made to them.

Is this, Sir, the only circumstance on which I rely? By no means. Every body rejoiced when the Inquisition in Europe was abolished. That dreadful instrument of the power, the vengeance, and the tyranny of the Roman Catholic religion, at the shrine of which so many unfortunate victims had been sacrificed; that most guilty contrivance to extirpate heresy, had fallen before the French Revolution. But guilty as this tribunal had been in its practice, infamous as it was in its pretensions, and contrary as were its principles to every maxim of jurisprudence and dictate of justice, it had been re-established in full force throughout Spain and Italy. What absurdity it is then to talk of the Roman Catholic Church having kept pace with the general improvement of the age.

I am, perhaps, asked, do I apprehend the establishment of that intolerant tribunal in Ireland? Certainly not, Sir. I allude to the circumstance in order to show, that in a part of Europe, at least, the principles and practice of the Roman Catholic religion are unchanged and the same! The barbarous features of antiquity still distinguish it. It is in vain to attribute this most detestable measure—the re-establishment of the Inquisition—to the civil government. It was authorized by the head of the Roman Catholic Church. Can any man refer to any document, or give any proof whatever, that the head of that Church had made the slightest exertion to put down this great scourge upon humanity, this outrage

upon the intellect and morals of civilized society? I would, therefore, press upon the consideration of the House, the question—"Is there less reason now, and when such are the circumstances of the Roman Catholic religion, to demand security, than at the former period, when it was thought necessary by the advocates of the measure?" (Cheering.)

Let me ask gentlemen, Sir, to take a view of the present condition of Ireland. In 1810, and from that time to 1813, Ireland was comparatively tranquil. She is now in a state of excitement and of agitation. What occasions the present state of things in that country? I answer, a body which domineers over that kingdom has caused the insubordination and disorder! What is it that the Roman Catholics of Ireland ask? Indeed, they do not condescend to ask, but in terms the most emphatic and peremptory—in the language of menace, they demand of us what they call the restoration of their rights—their unconditional restoration.

I allude, Sir, to the language of one of the chief orators of the Association. That person (Shiel) in addressing an Irish Roman Catholic meeting, said, "Ireland is a gigantic supplicant, thundering at the gates of the Constitution." When I talk of Ireland, let me read the opinions of her presumed advocates, and in them we shall find the secret of the policy now pursued by the Roman Catholics, and a key to the hopes they entertain. In these opinions—recorded and written opinions—it is distinctly stated, that "it is not owing to our decorous language we are placed in the vantage ground we at present occupy, but in consequence of the bold and decided statement of our opinions and our measures." They added, "if any thing be gained, it was not accomplished by following the course which gentle and moderate counsellors recommended." In another speech this language was held to the Roman Catholic audience, in order to excite them to obtain their demands: "The interests of your children are at stake. The time may come when your sons shall be slaughtered at your threshold, and your daughters in vain scream for help on the graves of their fathers." Why, Sir, do I advert to this language, or solicit the attention of the

House to it? Why, but to show the nature of the sentiments, temper, and opinions, which at present prevail in Ireland on this subject. It is most important that we consider these facts.

Let me not, Sir, be misunderstood in my argument. Ireland was in a state of order, when we thought securities indispensably necessary for the protection of the Established Church. Now, when Ireland is in a state in which I have described it, who will say that such securities can be dispensed with? It is impossible that we can dispense with those securities, which so many great characters have, on former occasions, considered so essential.

Sir, if there was any doubt upon the subject, it must be set at rest by referring to what was assumed by a public authority of the Church of Rome. I allude to the titular bishop of Kildare (Dr. Doyle,) and to the language which he has frequently used against the Protestants (hear). Are these circumstances calculated to allay our suspicions, and are we to do away with these securities, when we find this tone and spirit inflaming and actuating those who have such an uncontrollable dominion over the Irish? It is said, Sir, that these Roman Catholics are not the entire population of Ireland, and that what I complain of is merely the sin of a few. If I saw the rest of the Irish Roman Catholic hierarchy renouncing these proceedings, and dissenting from these opinions, I should say that my argument might be objected to. But I find that this language is not only used by a Prelate amongst them, but that immediately after his using it, he is cited as an oracle, and denominated a modern Fenelon, and loaded with the most extraordinary commendations; I say, that the Roman Catholics do adopt his language, and render themselves responsible for his act; and I judge of the whole body by this circumstance.—(Loud cheering.)

My argument, then, Sir, I beg to repeat it, is most important in the consideration of this question. I am not to be misunderstood. Let it not be supposed mine are narrow or illiberal views. Not on mine own account, or that of the great, illustrious, and dignified body, which I have the ho-

nour to represent, would I plead guilty to such an accusation. Sir, I beg leave to say, that a greater or more illustrious body cannot be found, and amongst them is included a class of men possessing more extensive and profound erudition, more liberal principles and opinions, than any persons in Europe. Such being the fact, I feel proud, and justly proud, of my situation, as the representative of that distinguished body. (Loud cheering, in which Mr. Scarlett joined in a very marked manner.) The honourable member who cheers me is aware of the truth of what I say, as he is amongst the number of my constituents—I would entreat him not to give vent to sarcasms, if not in words, yet by signs sufficiently intelligible; and I would beg, that though he himself has been a candidate for a similar honour, and has been unfortunately distanced in the race, he will not attempt to heap contumely and contempt, by his manner, upon that distinguished University (Cambridge).

I have endeavoured to prove, Sir, that securities are essential to the safety of the Protestant Establishment in Church and State; and I have endeavoured to show that those securities cannot be afforded; at all events, have been refused. I have also contended, that honourable gentlemen, who have adopted the principle of security, ought to support us on this occasion, except they are prepared to show reasons why the concessions required should now be granted without that security.

What, Sir, it has been asked, are the nature of the concessions sought to be obtained by the Roman Catholics? One of them is, the privilege of admission to this House. This is a most important subject—and it is doubly important to consider what would be the effect of that concession.

In the first place, Sir, about what subjects are we in the habit of consulting in Parliament? What says the King's writ under the authority of which the House is convoked? We are summoned to consult on things and matters relating to the Constitution, and safety of the Protestant Church. By the measure now proposed, we are required to admit into the legislature of the country, assembled to deliberate upon

matters connected with the safety of the Church of England, a body of Roman Catholics, directly hostile to that Church—men who, upon principle, must be hostile to it in every respect. Can we, with prudence, commit its interests to such persons? Before admitting those into Parliament, let us consider who they are, by what spirit they are actuated, and the circumstances in which they are to deliberate.

After Parliament passed the bill which entitled the forty shilling freeholders to vote, it was declared by a public authority (Earl of Clare) in Ireland, that the representation of that country was to all intents and purposes in the hands of the Irish Roman Catholic clergy. The same had been recently asserted, and we have just had sufficient evidence that the assertion was perfectly true. In 1825, when it was proposed to disfranchise the forty shilling freeholders, it was opposed by the crafty Roman Catholic hierarchy of Ireland, because it deprived them of their power and influence, and gave to those who opposed their authority too many of those privileges which enabled them to return members to this House. It behoves us all to consider what are the present feelings of that body with reference to that Church Establishment which it is our duty to defend, and for the defence of which we are called to Parliament.

I cannot do better, Sir, than refer to the sentiments and language of an individual to whom I have already alluded, as a specimen of the feelings entertained by the Roman Catholic clergy—feelings against the Established Church of Ireland, which it is our duty as legislators to oppose. Dr. Doyle describes the Established Church of Ireland, “not as the spouse of the Redeemer, but as the handmaid—her eyes are ever fixed on her own interests, and she deems nothing forbidden or unhallowed which serves to promote them.” Not content with this, the titular bishop of Kildare goes on to characterize the Protestant Church, as “revolting against those of her fellow-servants who share her spoils, remind her of her origin, or upbraid her with the profligacy of her mispent life.” Such are the feelings entertained towards the Protestant Church of Ireland by a bishop of

the Roman Catholic persuasion.—Such, Sir, are the opinions held towards the Protestant Establishment by individuals possessing great influence, and holding great sway over the minds of the population of Ireland, and wielding all the influence of that body, in whom the power of electing representatives is vested!

On the other hand, Sir, how are we situated? We are required to admit into this House honourable members so influenced, and so returned, and possessed of feelings such as I have described towards the Establishment of the Church of England. I have heard arguments frequently urged upon the impossibility of such a circumstance endangering the Establishment. It has been often said, that supposing sixty or seventy members of the Roman Catholic profession were returned to serve in Parliament, what possible injury could arise from such a circumstance—what means could they possibly devise for overturning the Protestant Establishment of this country? And those who ask such questions always answer them in the negative. But I am not satisfied on this point.

Now, Sir, I will entreat the House to recollect—and it is with sincere regret that I do so—that there are at the present moment, and have always been, many Protestant members of the House of Commons, who entertain views, and profess sentiments, of a nature hostile to the Established Church of these realms. If, in addition to the lukewarm friends, and avowed opponents, we throw into the scale another weight—if we add to this body another mass,—knowing as we do, that both will act with the same spirit, and make one common cause, shall we, I ask, be discharging our duty to the Church, of which we are members, and which we have pledged ourselves and are bound to support? I heard it remarked on a former occasion, by the honourable member for Corfe Castle (Mr. Bankes)—and the remark seemed to me well deserving the serious attention of the House—that if even we should be able in the end to oppose an effectual resistance to the hostile feelings or attempts of these parties, we should ask ourselves, whether it was nothing for us thus

to expose the Church to their repeated and continual attacks?

Let me pause for a moment, Sir, upon this part of the subject, and let me suppose that there are returned to this House some of those persons who exhibit in themselves specimens of some of those talents, which seem to be indigenous to Ireland—let me suppose some of the individuals of that body to be desirous of overturning the Protestant Establishment, and of rearing in its stead the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland—let me suppose these persons possessed of talents, resembling in their extent and power those of my right honourable friend the Attorney General for Ireland, commanding and swaying the body they represent by their masterly eloquence and extraordinary powers, and directing that eloquence and those powers to the object to which I have referred. I ask, is this a light danger, and are we to treat it with contempt; or, are we not, to reserve in our own hands the most effectual means of defending ourselves from such a danger?

I fear, Sir, I have trespassed too long upon the attention of the House. I confess—that passing the topics relating to this subject over in my mind with great rapidity, they connected themselves together in such a manner, that when I reviewed them I had no expectation of having been so long in my address—I must, however, still trespass further on your attention.

I here wish, Sir, to ask the other side what is it they propose? They tell us of other nations, and they talk much and loudly of the extraordinary liberality which prevails in several nations of the continent of Europe, with respect to religions which are not established in those states. Austria and France have been referred to as examples of this liberality. In the former of these, I have understood it to be said, that in no country does a spirit of liberality more fully prevail. If we look into the circumstances of that country, we shall see that there is not one point in which she can be said to be in the same situation as England. It may be true that in that country there are no distinctions as to religion;

but every body must know that all the members of the church and hierarchy of Austria are appointed by the civil government of the country. The same observation may be made with respect to France, and it will equally apply to all the other Roman Catholic countries of Europe; and therefore, I say that the arguments founded upon their liberality are not to be pressed upon us, since their situation is not analogous to our own—since they exercise a controul over the choice of the members of the church, and of the hierarchy, which we do not possess. There can, therefore, be no comparison instituted between what is done in the states to which I have alluded and what is done here. In them the church is established by law, and at once pays obedience to and receives support from the civil government.

But here, Sir, we are required to establish an hierarchy owing no obedience to the Crown—holding uncontrouled sway over the minds of a large body of the people—carrying on a correspondence—over which Government will possess no check—with a foreign state, to the opinions and maxims of which every man in Ireland will look for the rule of his conduct, and the authority of which he will acknowledge in every respect, while he pays no attention or obedience to our Government. I say, therefore, Sir, that considering these circumstances, I am fully justified in asserting that there is no analogy between the state of things in those countries and in this, and consequently, that we are not to be fettered by the arguments which are pressed upon us as drawn from the examples of those states.

And now, Sir, I will turn to another branch of the subject. We are told by those members who consider it with sentiments different to those which I entertain, that we must adopt some measures to tranquillize Ireland. “Surely,” say they, “you will not allow that unhappy country to stand as it at present stands—you have now gone so far, that you must of necessity proceed farther,”—and they therefore conclude, that the measure which they propose, is the measure which, for this purpose, the House ought to adopt.

Now, Sir, when I am informed, that some measure is

necessary to promote and to preserve the tranquillity of Ireland, I naturally ask myself, is *this* the measure calculated to effect this object, and to restore that tranquillity, the existence of which—I, as much as any individual in the kingdom, earnestly desire. When I hear this, I naturally ask, will our proceeding further risk the destruction of the Church Establishment? Will it be certain to effect the tranquillization of Ireland? If my first question is not satisfactorily answered, then I say you must not press upon me the argument as to tranquillizing Ireland. I say this, Sir, not out of a feeling of disregard for the tranquillity of that country. I lament as much as any man its unfortunate situation—I deplore her want of tranquillity; but it does not therefore follow, that I should suffer the introduction of a measure, which may destroy the Protestant Establishment, and which I am not quite satisfied will restore tranquillity to Ireland.

Does it follow, Sir, that, if the object of the honourable baronet were attained, it would allay the ferment, and cure the disorder of which he complains? For my own part, I feel that if the legislature did agree to pass this measure, a great ebullition of popular feeling would be excited. On the one hand, the Roman Catholics would triumph in the advantages they gained, and would not hesitate openly to express their pleasure; on the other hand, the Protestants—at least a preponderating majority of them—would feel depressed and subdued, and would regret the success of an attempt which they cannot but consider injurious to the interests of their Church. It is not improbable, that these opposite feelings may generate others of a less peaceful nature, should they accidentally come into collision. There certainly would be a great explosion in Ireland, followed, perhaps, by a momentary calm, but no man who considers the nature of the country—who reflects upon the constitution of the Roman Catholic religion—and who views the probable objects of the men now seeking for admission to political power, will be able to say, with any degree of confidence, that the moment of granting this measure will lead to the permanent allaying of those differences and dissensions

which now unhappily exist. I am certain, Sir, that no man who gives this subject a fair and important consideration, will conclude that it will have any other than a transitory effect.

The Roman Catholic religion, Sir, is a religion of ambition, of encroachment; and its nature is continually to aim at the possession of something beyond that which it had heretofore possessed. The Roman Catholics consider, and have always considered, the Protestants as a people by whom they have been supplanted, and that the Church property is property that has been wrested from their hands. Is there then any person in this country, who can seriously think that the Roman Catholic hierarchy, which possesses unbounded sway over the minds of the Irish people, would ever suffer Ireland to remain tranquil, while some object or other was yet to be obtained—that it would ever cease its exertions, day after day, until it had obtained not what is named Roman Catholic emancipation, but Roman Catholic ascendancy? (Loud cheering.)

Sir, he who seeks to give permanent tranquillity to Ireland, takes an ill course to obtain it for her, by dissenting from the proposition, which I now press upon the House. The arguments on which I ground this opinion are not speculative, they are founded on the experience of history, but not on that alone, nor even on that in conjunction with the acts of Roman Catholics, which may be taken as proofs of their spirit, but on the very declarations of Roman Catholic bishops, who have spoken too openly to leave a doubt on any rational mind as to their object and intentions. Does not Dr. Doyle, the Roman Catholic bishop of Kildare tell us, in a publication, which has been frequently referred to in this House, that "*although Catholic emancipation will do much, there is much more to be accomplished.*" Now, surely it is impossible to mistake such a sentiment as this, and I will ask of any honourable member who is acquainted with Ireland, if this sentiment is confined to the work from which it is quoted?

I bring thus, Sir, the Roman Catholic religion into the

discussion of the question at issue between us, for the purpose of placing the question as it ought to be placed—for the purpose of showing that it is not whether or not a certain number of Roman Catholics shall become members of the British House of Commons; but the great, the important, the ultimate point to be determined is, whether or not the Protestant Establishment shall continue to exist in Ireland? (Cheering.) Can any one doubt this fact, who has given the slightest attention to the language I have quoted, or who believes that such a sentiment is unconfined in its nature and its object?

I, therefore, Sir, exhort the members of the British House of Commons not to imagine, that such a measure as that to which they are now called to give their sanction—notwithstanding what some honourable and distinguished individuals may think upon the subject—is at all calculated to restore a permanent tranquillity to Ireland. I exhort them not to be led away by any such chimerical idea. I call upon them rather to consider whether the destruction of the Protestant Establishment is not the object, and will not be the consequence of these measures, and to pause before they lend their assistance to a proposition that may be attended with such a result.

The Protestant Church Establishment in Ireland, Sir, is a part of the State. We are, therefore, only to ask ourselves, are we satisfied—are we ready to relinquish it? I believe, Sir, that there are in this House members who would willingly take issue upon this question, but all do not feel the same upon that point; and to these latter gentlemen I appeal, and I say, do not fancy that by adopting these measures you will put an end to the storm that has so long distracted Ireland. I am convinced that such a vote will produce no such effect, but, on the contrary, will lead to new demands, that will be attended with as much excitement of feeling as that which we are now discussing. I am certain that, if we admit sixty or seventy Roman Catholic Members into this House, the next measure that will be demanded will be, the upsetting of the Protestant Establishment in Ireland. In

what a situation shall we then be? If we object to the new proposals, we shall be again told that, as we have gone so far, we must go farther, and we shall be reminded of what we are now doing, and shall be told that we ought to have taken our stand before. (Loud cheering.)

Let us, Sir, prevent such a consequence. It is, Sir, in the most sober earnestness that I press these subjects upon the consideration of the House. How am I met in so doing? I am asked, if I object to the measures now proposed, what course I mean to recommend, in order to restore that tranquillity to Ireland, which, it is generally admitted, she is without. I do not know that I ought to be required to answer such a question. My answer, therefore, is, that I am not a member of his Majesty's Government; I am not one of the Ministers of the Crown; I am not united to them otherwise than by the respect I owe to the individuals of which it is composed. It would consequently be idle, and indeed mischievous, for me to point out any course which I should be inclined to adopt.

But when I am asked, Sir, what I should propose previous to the granting of this measure, I ask in return what securities have the Roman Catholics offered to give for the concessions they require us to make? If I am told, as I have been told, that these claims are to be purchased by securities, I ask in what do those securities consist, and of what nature are they? If I am satisfied that those securities are ample and adequate for the purpose, I will grant the concessions for which the Roman Catholics apply. If their securities are sufficient, I will concede the question, but I must first know what those securities are—I must ascertain whether they are equivalent to the objects—I must have an opportunity of deliberating upon them—I must satisfy myself with regard to their weight and value; and that they keep pace with the importance of the concessions, to the safety of the country, and the security of the Established Church of these realms. If I am satisfied upon these points, I am ready to make concessions to the Roman Catholics; but until that time I must oppose any concessions whatever.

Sir, diversity of opinion as to principles by which we should be governed, in a House like this, formed of men of liberal minds and enlightened understandings, is not to be expected upon this question. On principles I dare say we all agree. The only difference among us, is, as to the circumstances in which those principles are to be called into operation. There is but one proposition that will meet with the concurrence of all men, and that is a proposition for concessions granted upon full securities. If securities are proposed to which the Roman Catholics will accede, and with which the Protestants will be satisfied, I, for one, shall be ready to make concessions. I beg pardon for having trespassed so long on the attention of the House, but I was anxious that the manner in which I viewed this question should not be misunderstood, and that anxiety must stand as my excuse.

The Motion was rejected by 276.

S P E E C H

OF

GEORGE ROBERT DAWSON, ESQ.

M. P. FOR DERRY, AND UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE.

When the second reading of the "Roman Catholic Disability Bill" was moved in the House of Commons, April 19, 1825, GEORGE ROBERT DAWSON, Esq. M. P. for Derry, and Under Secretary of State, delivered the following splendid, eloquent, argumentative, and truly Constitutional oration.

SIR.—Often as the subject has been discussed, and tired as the public attention might be supposed to be from repeated debates, yet, strange to say, the Catholic Question seems to acquire a new interest every day. In England, from the peace and prosperity of the country, from the unvarying success which has pursued all public measures adopted by the present Parliament, it is viewed as the only question which portends a doubtful result, and it is considered and discussed by all classes with that caution and judgment which is so peculiarly national; it seems, however, to be the great political question of the day; all parties have their opinions, differing in character and discordant as to the result, but all agreeing in the great importance and the vast changes which the alteration of the present law must introduce into the constitution of the country. In Ireland, Sir, the interest created by this question is intense beyond description; the ordinary business of life is suspended in order to give an undivided attention to this great question; every individual becomes a politician, and before the question is settled, there will be found to be as many opinions as there are individuals. In cities, in towns, in villages, the interest is equally intense; the press is exclusively devoted to it; orators are found without number to inflame, both in public and private, the passions of the people, to work upon those passions at the expense of their judgment, and to unite

the people into one great mass of discontent, for objects, the attainment of which will neither confer universal good, nor relieve individual suffering. The clergy of all persuasions, of the Established Church, Presbyterian, and Roman Catholic, are equally zealous in propagating and supporting their own opinions; in short, no class of persons is neuter, and the whole of conversation in private life, and of discussion in public meetings, is engrossed in this one great and overwhelming subject. Nor is the interest confined to these islands; throughout Europe a general expectation prevails upon the subject, and both the friends and enemies of England are looking to the discussion of this great question, as involving in it the most serious consequences to this mighty empire, and conferring, according to the wishes of the friend or foe, the principles of increased strength, or of certain disorganization.

It is not surprising, therefore, Sir, that we should approach this question with feelings of the greatest alarm; it is not surprising that we should almost shrink from the responsibility of deciding upon the fate of millions; as for myself, Sir, I can truly state that I am haunted with the apprehensions of what may be the consequences, whichever way the question may be decided. In no point of view can I contemplate a result which is safe for the country, honourable for the legislature, or satisfactory to the parties interested. On the one side, I fear to perpetuate a system, which is called by some a system of injustice, against millions of my fellow-countrymen; on the other, I fear to introduce a change, which has been regarded by the best and wisest men of England as fatal to the constitution and liberties of this great empire. On the one side, Sir, I fear to impede a prosperity which, after centuries of misery and bloodshed, is predicted for Ireland, by the adoption of a new system; on the other hand, that the upsetting of every thing established in that country, will lead to consequences by no means calculated to promote its welfare. On the one side, I dread to have a question unsettled, stimulating all the passions of the multitude, disturbing the tranquillity, and leaving the people a prey to any mischievous agitators who may work upon their

passions for their own selfish purposes; on the other hand, I dread the introduction of a system which will consolidate the strength of a party in Ireland, adverse to all the established institutions, hostile to the established religion, full of rancour for past triumphs, and ready to take advantage of the first opportunity to mark their vengeance, and to enjoy their triumphs in return.

When such conflicting consequences, Sir, arising from the nature of the Catholic Question, are poised and balanced in the state, it is no pleasant duty to have the decision imposed upon you; most willingly would I avoid the performance of the duty, for, in truth, the responsibility is most awful and alarming; and, without affectation, I can assure the House, that it has cost me many hours of uneasiness and anxiety. Were I convinced that the advantages outweigh the disadvantages; were I convinced that peace and tranquillity, that the oblivion of ancient struggles, that subordination to the laws, that respect for the established institutions of the country, that industry, and in consequence wealth and prosperity, were probable, or even possible, by concession to the Roman Catholic Claims, I would willingly abandon all the notions which I have so long entertained upon the subject, would expose myself to all the obloquy and all the unpopularity of a change of opinion, and seek for comfort in the prospect of these new advantages for Ireland.

But, Sir, I own that I am not so convinced; whatever doubts I entertained before, when relying upon my own weak judgment and imperfect opportunities of observation, as to the effect produced by the discussion of the Catholic Question, upon the people of Ireland, those doubts are confirmed by the evidence and experience of others much better able to form an opinion upon the subject, whose evidence is now upon the table of the House, and which ought to be read with eagerness by every man interested for the welfare of Ireland. It is, I conceive, Sir, a most fortunate circumstance, that the evidence from the Committee appointed to inquire into the state of Ireland, is laid before the public at this particular time; it contains a volume of information respecting the

condition of the people, their habits and circumstances; respecting the operations of the laws, both local and general; respecting the nature and effect of every institution, both public and private, such as never, up to this time, has been condensed together. In this evidence an impartial mind will discover, without difficulty, the condition of every class, Church-of-England men, Presbyterians, and Roman Catholics, portrayed by those most qualified to give a description, from constant intercourse; it will lead you into the cabin of the peasant in every part of the country; into the house of the landlord; into the mysterious recesses of the land agent and the tithe proctor; into the halls of justice, whether at assize, quarter-sessions, petty sessions, or manor courts; it will lead you into the Protestant church, the Presbyterian meeting-house, and the Roman Catholic chapel; it presents a view of the population in their domestic habits, as labourers, mechanics, and tenants; and details the obstacles against their improvement, arising not more from their own habits, than from the administration of the laws; it presents a view of the population as part of a political body, influenced by the disabilities which the law has imposed upon a great portion of the people; and it presents a view of the characteristic marks of distinction which the profession of different creeds has stamped respectively upon Protestant and Roman Catholic.

With this mass of information, Sir, it will not be difficult to discover the exact effect which the Roman Catholic disabilities produce upon the Roman Catholic population; and I was greatly surprised to hear from such competent witnesses as Mr. O'Connell, Dr. Doyle, and Dr. Kelly, how very little the great body of the people is affected by the disqualifying laws. That the greatest wretchedness exists amongst them, is beyond doubt: that poverty, that want of employment, insubordination, distrust in all the established institutions of the country, fraud, perjury, and immorality, arising from that distrust, exist to a frightful extent, is beyond all doubt; but that Roman Catholic emancipation is the cure for these evils, or one which is regarded by the pea-

santry in any other light than the gratification of religious bigotry, is what these gentlemen have not ventured to assert.

Let us, for a moment, Sir, consider the picture which Mr. O'Connell has drawn of the Roman Catholic population in the counties of Cork, Kerry, Limerick, and Clare. It is to be observed, first, that he describes the effect of the disqualifying laws of the Roman Catholics to be among the upper classes, discontent at being excluded from certain offices in the State, which lead to honour or profit; and among the lower classes, a soreness and irritation on account of the spirit of superiority exhibited by the Protestants; let us contemplate, for an instant, Sir, the picture which he has given of the population in those four great counties, and see, according to his own statement, how insignificant the operation of such feelings must be, and how perfectly hopeless the repeal of all the disqualifying laws would be, in improving the condition of the people. We must recollect, that he describes the Roman Catholic population in the counties of Limerick, Clare, and Kerry, compared with the Protestants, as one hundred to one; he says, the Protestants are universally in favour of Catholic emancipation; it is evident, therefore, that in that part of the country, there can be no insolence or domination on the one side, or soreness or irritation on the other; it is, in fact, a Roman Catholic population, the habits and pursuits of the people are all Roman Catholic; the common business of life is carried on according to Roman Catholic maxims and Roman Catholic regulations, and unless Mr. O'Connell periodically came down to tell them that they were the most oppressed people in the world, because he cannot become a member of parliament or a judge, they would not trouble their heads about Roman Catholic emancipation, as long as they found the causes of their misery and degradation so much more tangible, so much more intelligible to them, so much more felt in the every-day intercourse of life.

But what, Sir, is the condition of the people? Mr. O'Connell says, that the condition of the labouring classes is so bad, that it is astonishing how they preserve health; there

is a total privation of every thing like comfort; and their existence is such, that the inferior animals of this country would not endure it. Their houses or cabins, than which it would be impossible to have any thing worse, are built of mud, covered partly with thatch, and partly what are called scraws, and but miserably defended against the winds and rains of heaven; that they have no furniture, not a box, nor a dresser, nor a plate, and indeed scarcely any utensil except a cast-metal pot to boil their potatoes in; that their bedding consists in general of straw; that a blanket is a rarity, that they are without bedsteads, and whole families, both male and female, sleep in the same apartment; that they have but one suit of clothes, or more properly rags, no change in case of wet or accident, and that their food, throughout the greatest part of the year, consists of potatoes and water; during the rest of the year, of potatoes and sour milk; that there is no regular employment for the people, and that the rate of wages, when they are employed, varies from sixpence to fourpence a day; that money is an article hardly known by the Irish peasant, and yet, notwithstanding the scarcity of this commodity, that the land-jobbers set their land according to the con-acre system, at the enormous rent of eight or ten pounds an acre. The consequence of these enormous rents, and the great avidity of the Irish peasant to possess land, which, in fact, for want of employment, is necessary for his subsistence, the consequence is an extraordinary increase in the number of sub-lettings, so it happens not unfrequently, that there are six or seven persons between the proprietor in fee and the actual occupier.

But, Sir, how does Mr. O'Connell describe the state of society in which such a state of things is suffered to exist? How does he describe the effect of the law passed to check these evils, and the conduct of the people towards each other in the daily intercourse of life? In consequence of these sub-lettings, the spirit of litigation is increased, their dealings with one another are frequently complicated, and they are invariably harsh and unfeeling towards each other in pecuniary matters. The appeals to courts of law are nu-

merous, and on the most trivial occasions; but when they do appear, the most frightful immorality is exhibited. The obligation of an oath is disregarded; the flippant and distinct swearer is always successful; to have a conscience is an inconvenience, and parents employ their children, at the earliest age, to be their witnesses in courts of justice; to get rid, as soon as possible, of the ties of conscience, and to think falsehood and perjury the only means of successful litigation.

Mr. O'Connell then proceeds, Sir, to describe the effect which the laws have had in checking the evil habits of the peasantry in these counties; and no wonder that he is much disappointed at their result. Laws are made to regulate and guide society, to guard against the frailty of human nature, to protect the weak against the strong, and to give a practical evidence of the advantages of order and regularity over force and lawlessness; but, in order to be useful, laws must be kindly administered, and unless there are agents to carry them into execution, it would be just as well to have no laws at all. Such is the unfortunate condition of this part of the country, the material for executing the laws is so bad, that justice is a total stranger to these districts; the laws which have been found good in more favoured parts, are here the very cause of tyranny and oppression. The unfortunate people seem to labour under a political curse; the order of nature is reversed, and the vine tree is made to produce the thorn, and the fig tree to bear the thistle. Mr. O'Connell says, that every act of Parliament passed since the peace, has had the effect of depressing the people, and rendering their condition worse; nor does he confine himself to the laws passed since the peace; he seems totally to forget that it is the administration of the laws by the Roman Catholics themselves, and not the laws, which is the cause of the depraved condition of the people. How else can a law be found useful in Ulster, and injurious in Munster?

But, Sir, it is right to mention some at least of the laws which he condemns, and which have wrought such different results in different parts of the country. In 1817, a law was

passed to regulate the dealings between landlord and tenant; the effect of this law was to give the landlord a certain and expeditious process of getting possession of his lands from a tenant under the yearly rent of 50*l.*, who did not pay his rent, and also to give the occupying tenant a cheap and speedy remedy against the middleman, who had allowed the head landlord to distrain the occupying tenant for rent due by the middleman. Now, Sir, this law is described by Mr. O'Connell as leading to murder and insurrection in the south, whilst it is described by my honourable friend, the member for Louth, (Leslie Foster, Esq.) as the most important and the most useful law to the landed interest in the north, which has ever passed the legislature. In another part of his evidence, Mr. O'Connell says, "in his conscience he is thoroughly convinced, that if a society were instituted to discourage virtue, and countenance vice, it would be ingenious indeed if it had discovered such a system as the Assistant Barristers' Court;" but, in another part of the country, in the north, and in the counties of Leinster, the most honourable testimony is given in favour of this court, and the administration of justice in it is described to be satisfactory to the people who bring their cases before it, honourable to the magistrates presiding, and creditable to the juries who are engaged in it. How different to Mr. O'Connell's statement! The barristers are incompetent, the juries corrupt, the witnesses and litigants perjured! Even tithes, the grand cause of discontent in other parts, assume a different complexion in these ill-fated regions. The Protestant Clergyman, the owner and proprietor of the tithe, ceases to be an object of hatred, as in other places; but the proctor, who is invariably a Roman Catholic, is merciless and unrelenting, and encounters the double portion of hatred, and often of vengeance, which is due to his Protestant master and to his own exactions.

Such, Sir, is a small, a very small portion of the evils described by Mr. O'Connell as pervading the counties of Kerry, Cork, Limerick and Clare. I have not mentioned a tenth part of the practical misery detailed in his evidence, as a

matter of every-day occurrence; but it must strike every body, that in a country so circumstanced, the Roman Catholic disabilities are evils of the very least consequence: indeed it is not quite clear, whether Roman Catholic emancipation would not follow the fate of all the other laws intended for their advantage, and become an evil instead of a benefit.

But, Sir, who will undertake to say, that Roman Catholic emancipation will tranquillize a country so circumstanced; what men will be bold enough to send their capital into such districts; to employ the population, and teach them habits of industry and peace? What a reformation must take place, totally independent of the Catholic question, before order and regularity will be introduced; before confidence is inspired, before the reciprocal duties of man towards man are understood; before morality is considered as a master of duty, and not of speculation, and before the rights of property are understood and protected! Who will undertake to say, that Roman Catholic emancipation, and the payment of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, will render one soldier less necessary, one policeman less indispensable, in a state of society such as is described by Mr. O'Connell to exist in the counties of Clare, Kerry, Cork, and Limerick? The country may secure his attachment by opening Parliament and the bench to his ambition; but the great body of the people will be left still in the same state of nakedness and misery, and England will be still called upon to supply her arms and her gold to keep the mass of the people in subjection to those laws, which are as much calculated for their protection now, as if they had been enacted by Mr. O'Connell himself, in propria personâ.

But, Sir, though I was doubtful of the benefits which the removal of the disqualifying laws against the Roman Catholics would confer upon Ireland, I was by no means doubtful of the evil consequences which would arise from it. It is said that Roman Catholic Emancipation will unite the Protestant and the Roman Catholic; that it will confer upon the Roman Catholic all the advantages to which a just ambition may aspire; and that it will take away from the Pro-

testant nothing but his prejudices and his fears. If I was convinced that such would be the case, I should be ashamed to continue an opposition to their claims. But, Sir, when I consider the position of the two parties; when I consider the declarations which have been made, and the signs which have been given, I can never expect that the two parties will amalgamate together. The Protestants are in possession of all that is valuable in Ireland; their estates, no matter whether rightly or wrongfully, have been wrested from the Roman Catholics. The establishments of the country conferring emolument and honour, are all Protestant; the Church conferring a splendid provision upon its ministers, and the corporations giving station and power and influence to its members, are all Protestant, and have all, at no distant period, been in possession of Roman Catholics.

Is it possible therefore to think, Sir, that all the solid advantages can be on one side, without exciting a hope of enjoyment on the other? Can Protestants and Roman Catholics really unite together when such tempting objects are open to the Roman Catholics, and when a public clamour has already been begun against the Protestants? Will the Roman Catholics be satisfied to see every Protestant institution rolling in wealth and splendour, whilst his own are in poverty and distress? Will he submit to have his churches, his convents, his schools, his colleges, supported by alms, whilst his Protestant rival revels in the enjoyment of Roman Catholic possessions? Human nature forbids us to think so; and I must do the Roman Catholics the justice to say, that they have been no hypocrites on this occasion, but have proclaimed boldly and naturally their expectations.

If, Sir, power be given to the Roman Catholics, it is in vain to think that the two establishments can be co-existent. The wealth and influence of the Protestants are too great to be viewed with passive indifference; and the ambition and overbearing disposition of the Roman Catholic hierarchy and Roman Catholic laity, are too notorious to be satisfied with the empty sounds of equal rights. Their gentry and nobility are ambitious; their priesthood is overbearing, arrogant, and

intolerant; and their people, on account of their physical misery and degradation, will become their ready tools for any change, and will make their grievances, no matter whether arising from rents, tithes, or taxes, as much a cause of complaint against their rulers, in order to bring on Roman Catholic Supremacy, as they have already done to bring on Roman Catholic Emancipation. The Roman Catholic people of Ireland will never think that Ireland can be prosperous under a Protestant Government. The Roman Catholic institutions must clash with the spirit of Protestant liberality, and unless the greatest encouragement be given to those institutions, the people will become proportionably discontented.

Will any man undertake to say, Sir, that the Order of Jesuits ought to be encouraged, or even tolerated, by a Protestant Government?—an order which has been proscribed by almost every state in Europe, and which is the more dangerous on account of the ability and unpretending ambition of its leaders; and yet such an institution is in perfect activity in Ireland. Notwithstanding the positive contradiction of my honourable friend the member for the Queen's County, (Sir H. Parnell,) and his contradiction, in my opinion, proves the suspicion in which the Establishment regards its own friends, yet, notwithstanding his contradiction, Mr. O'Connell has allowed, that the Jesuits are in full activity in Ireland. Will a Protestant Government encourage the Jesuits? If it does, the Jesuits will soon rouse the people against such a government. Will a Protestant Government allow an unlimited endowment of monasteries, abbeys, and convents? Will it relax the laws of mortmain in favour of Roman Catholic Establishment, and exempt the bequests of pious Roman Catholics from the same degree of jealousy and scrutiny, which they have adopted with respect to Protestant institutions? And yet, if there is any jealousy on the subject, what a clamour will be raised by the Roman Catholic party! Already, Sir, the laws are considered unjust, inquisitorial, and partial, which subject these bequests to any limitation; but if Catholicism shall become a part and parcel of

the Constitution, what denunciations we shall hear against any minister who shall dare to interfere with the disposition of private property for such pious purposes ! With respect to schools and colleges, Sir, the same clashing principles will prevail. If the Roman Catholics be admitted to power, will not their laity and their priesthood be naturally anxious to procure pecuniary assistance for their schools and colleges ? And yet, Sir, let any man read the evidence of Mr. O'Connell respecting the Collège of Maynooth, and ask himself, if a parliament would be justified in encouraging such a system of education in a free country ? He describes it to be carried on according to the most rigid principles of monastic discipline ; to be the abode of gloom, secrecy, and retirement ; to teach nothing but theology, and that, too, the theology of the Jesuits ; and to deaden the hearts of its youthful inhabitants by shutting them out from all intercourse with the world, their friends and relations. Under any circumstances, is it not the duty of a government to superintend such an establishment ? But, if increased funds were added to it, and if Catholicism were to be incorporated in our Constitution, would a Protestant Government be justified in exempting it from the same jurisdiction which the French Government extends over the colleges and seminaries in that country, in order to protect them from the introduction of principles subversive of the rights of the Gallican Church ? And yet, we know enough of the Roman Catholic disposition in Ireland to be assured, that if any scrutiny, much more a scrutiny of the jealous character of the French Government, was exercised over Maynooth College, the whole Roman Catholic body, clergy, and laity, would be in arms against such unjust interference.

But, Sir, it is unnecessary to go on detailing how Roman Catholic objects and Protestant principles must clash together ; let any man refer to the evidence on the table, and in every page he will see, not only how incompatible the two Establishments are to exist together, but how decided and certain are the expectations of the Roman Catholics to make their religion ascendant in Ireland. And here, Sir, I will

make one or two observations with respect to the prominent characters who have given evidence, and to warn the House against their tone and manner. Like many others, I was greatly struck with the manner and moderation of several of those gentlemen; it was impossible not to admire the information and the abilities displayed by Mr. Blake and Mr. O'Connell; it was impossible, also, not to admire the demeanour of the Roman Catholic bishops, Dr. Murray and Dr. Doyle, and particularly the eloquence, learning, and zeal, displayed by those two prelates; but, I am obliged to say, though my admiration of their talents still continues, my confidence in their testimony is very much abated; it is impossible on any rational grounds to reconcile the turbulence and vehemence of Mr. O'Connell in Ireland with his moderation and forbearance before the committee; it is impossible to reconcile the exaggerated statement of his speeches in Ireland with the palliations and admissions of his evidence; it is impossible to reconcile his advice and counsel to his countrymen with the picture which he has drawn in his evidence of the history and condition of Ireland; it is impossible to reconcile his political principles with his political remedies, and I know not how the same man can be the friend of Cobbett and the honourable member for Westminster, of universal suffrage and the disqualification of the Irish freeholders; I am reduced, therefore, to the disagreeable necessity of viewing all his testimony with considerable diffidence, and as tending to show more the strength of his wishes than of his conviction.

But, Sir, I was still more astonished at the evidence of Dr. Doyle. There is the greatest inconsistency between his evidence as a political writer and a parliamentary witness: it is impossible to believe that both should come from the brain of the same man; and in whatever manner it is viewed, whether in the meekness exhibited before the committee, or in the hatred and rancour pervading his political writings, it must excite the most lively apprehensions respecting the truth and justice of a cause, which is advocated by a man of his abilities, and his station in this double character. It is

quite notorious, Sir, that during the last two years Dr. Doyle has sent into the world several political pamphlets, or rather books, under the signature of J. K. L.; there is no doubt that he is the author of these works, as an address was voted to him by name, (Dr. Doyle,) by the Catholic Association, conveying the thanks of that body for his works, which address he accepted; these pamphlets, together with twelve letters on the State of Ireland, published a few weeks since, contain the grossest attacks upon every Protestant institution in Ireland, and must excite the fears of every man attached to the Church and the Protestant Establishment. In every page, whether as a legislator, as a divine, or as a citizen of the world, he breathes the most rancorous spirit against the laws, against the Church Establishment, against the Protestant population; as a legislator he teaches the people to despise the laws, and to regard them as formed much more for their depression and degradation, than for their improvement; as a divine he cannot conceal his fury against the Protestant Church, at the bare mention of the name of Protestant Church he is thrown into agonies, in which he gives vent to the most undignified reproaches, and to the most unfounded calumnies against all its members; he reviles its ceremonies, condemns its principles, and abuses all the ministers of its church in the most unmeasured terms. In speaking of his own church he is arrogant and intolerant, and presents one of the truest pictures of an obedient son to the See of Rome, which these countries ever produced.

If Dr. Doyle had power, Sir, Popes Gregory and Boniface could not desire a more able or willing instrument to lay Ireland in shackles at the feet of their Holinesses. Such are his sentiments, such are his principles, when he appears before the world as a political writer; but, when he appears before the Parliamentary Committee, he changes his character altogether; he is moderate in his views, measured in his language, liberal in his principles; he is an admirer of the British Constitution, he is an admirer of its laws; he abjures the power of the Pope, except in matters purely spiritual, and he is as sturdy as any old covenanter in refusing

him any power, except in the institution of bishops; he has his answers ready for every question, and those answers always happen to be precisely the answers which the warmest friend of Roman Catholic emancipation would desire to get; they are copious, learned, and eloquent.

But, Sir, take him on doubtful or forbidden ground, and his whole manner changes; ask him about the letters of J. K. L.; ask him about the principles contained in those letters, his answers are short and pithy. "Have you seen a late publication, entitled, Letters on the State of Ireland by J. K. L.?—I have seen them." "Do you hold the same opinions with the author of those letters?—I dare say I do." "Do you hold the same opinions with respect to the forty-shilling freeholders?" Here was the touchstone; he saw he was getting upon dangerous ground; his letters had been written and published before he was let into the secret of the compromise of effecting Roman Catholic emancipation at the expense of the Roman Catholic freeholders; like a good general, but like an indifferent ecclesiastic, he determined to parry the question; he appealed therefore to the kindness and courtesy of the committee to spare him an examination upon that subject; his appeal prevailed, and he was allowed to escape from the dilemma to which he must inevitably have been exposed by further examination; the artifice, however, cannot succeed; his books are published, his evidence is published, and every reflecting mind ought to compare them together, before implicit credence can be given to the evidence of Dr. Doyle.

Now, Sir, the mischiefs of this double dealing are incalculable, and render the settlement of this question almost impossible. In Ireland, the public opinion, among the Roman Catholics, is governed entirely by the opinions of Dr. Doyle and Mr. O'Connell. Dr. Doyle undertakes the management of the ecclesiastical, Mr. O'Connell the management of the lay part of the population. The former teaches the Roman Catholic clergy to consider the Protestant Church as heretical, intrusive, tyrannical and useless; he points to its wealth as wrested from the Roman Catholic Church; its places of

worship as insulting to the Roman Catholic population, and its ministers as spoliators and scorpions. He is believed in Ireland by the Roman Catholic clergy, and he is dreaded by the Protestant clergy. Mr. O'Connell pursues the same system in alienating the minds of the lay population from everything which is established and Protestant; the consequence is, that there is scarcely a Protestant in Ireland who does not dread some great convulsion from concession to the Roman Catholic Claims, and scarcely a Roman Catholic who does not expect to gain something more than eligibility to either. But in this country they both adopt a different language, and mould their opinions according to those of their auditory.

The result of this artifice is, Sir, that the Protestants of Ireland have a well-grounded alarm that the British Parliament is deceived; they think their own cause abandoned, and they attribute this defection to the hollow, deceitful, and dangerous tone adopted by the Roman Catholic leaders in this country; they compare this moderation, and the effect it has had upon the English mind, with the fury and violence which is practised in Ireland; and they anticipate nothing but ruin and desolation to the Protestant cause. To expect an union of sentiment, to expect an oblivion of ancient struggles, to expect the tranquillization of present fears, and to anticipate a brighter prospect in future, is, under such circumstances, impossible; nay, the Roman Catholics themselves take good care that the Protestants in England shall not be deceived upon the subject. Already they see the prey within their grasp; already they have sent forth their manifestoes, and have begun to sing their songs of triumph. If the Protestants look to the proceedings of the Roman Catholic body in the present day; if they look to their speeches and resolutions; if they look to the records of history to contemplate what their future condition must be, when the Roman Catholics have succeeded in obtaining power, they can find nothing consolatory, nothing but the ruin and overthrow of their own establishments. The menaces and the intentions of the Roman Catholics are too

manifest, and the examples of history are too convincing to leave any doubt upon the subject.

And here, Sir, I shall beg to call the attention of the House to a most curious historical coincidence which cannot fail to prove that the objects of the Roman Catholics in Ireland are unchanged and unchangeable. On the 31st of May, 1824, a petition was presented to this House by the honourable and learned member for Winchelsea (Mr. Brougham), from the Catholic Association. The petition itself was long and comprehensive, and so general was its censure of everything established in Ireland, that it called forth the reprobation of even the honourable and learned member himself, who declined to found any measure upon it, from the certain conviction, that the House would mark its indignation of the matter contained in it. The petition, however, concluded with this prayer:—"The petitioners therefore pray, that the House will cause a thorough reform to be made in the temporalities of the Established Church; that the House will render Orangemen ineligible to serve as magistrates or jurors; that the House will disfranchise the corporations; and that the House will pass an act to emancipate the Roman Catholics of Ireland." Now, Sir, in order to know what the Roman Catholics mean by a reform in the temporalities of the Established Church, I must refer to the works of J. K. L. and there I will find, that a reform in the temporalities means, to strip the Protestant Church of all its property, and to give its ministers a stipend proportioned to their duties; to take away the churches, in order to restore them to the Roman Catholics; and to put the schools, colleges, and endowments of the Protestant Establishment upon a new footing. The disfranchisement of the corporations, and disqualification of Protestants to serve as judges or jurors, is clear enough.

Now, Sir, it is a curious coincidence, that every one of these objects, which are so fervently sought for by the Roman Catholics in 1824, were actually carried into execution in 1687 and 1688, when the Roman Catholics had unrestrained power in Ireland; and with the permission of the House I

shall mention how this was effected and its consequences. In the year 1687, when Lord Tyrconnell was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, and when it was determined in King James's cabinet to root out the Protestant Establishment in Ireland, the first act of his administration, in order to secure this object, was to remove every Protestant from the administration of justice. The Protestant judges were accordingly removed from the bench, Protestant magistrates from the commission of the peace, Papists were put into their places; every office of justice from a sheriff to a constable was filled by a Papist.

Having succeeded in getting complete power over the lives and properties of the Protestants by the appointment of Roman Catholic ministers of justice, the next object of attack was against the corporations. Accordingly, to use the language of the Roman Catholic petition, the corporations were all disfranchized; their charters were taken away, and new charters given, by which the King reserved to himself the power of displacing any mayor, alderman, or burgess. The corporations, therefore, became the slaves of the King's will, and by displacing all the Protestant members, and filling up their places with Papists, he in fact secured to himself a complete and uncontrollable power over the legislature, and commanded the corporations to return such men to Parliament as best suited his purpose.

Having settled these preliminaries, the next step was, Sir, to summon a Parliament, in order to have the colour of law for the great and comprehensive scheme of destroying the Protestant religion. In 1689 a Parliament met in Dublin; and from the precautions taken by the Government to give orders to the sheriffs to return none but Papists from the counties, and from the complete possession of the corporations by the Roman Catholics, it was just such a Parliament as the most sanguine Roman Catholic could desire. The House of Commons consisted of 228 members, eight of whom only were Protestants; the House of Lords consisted of forty-six members, of whom only eight or nine were Protestants.

Behold, therefore, Sir, the Roman Catholics in full power, and what was the use which they made of it? Their first act was to repeal the Act of Settlement, an act which had been passed in the reign of King Charles II., for confirming the titles of the forfeited estates, and which then, as it does now, formed the title by which more than two-thirds of the Protestant proprietary of Ireland held their lands. This act was repealed, and more than twelve millions of acres left at the disposal of the Crown for repaying the fidelity of its Roman Catholic subjects. In vain some Papists, who had purchased estates under the Act of Settlement and explanation, remonstrated against being deprived of their possessions. Their remonstrances were useless, they were told they must suffer for the general good; and I beg, Sir, to submit this proceeding for the consideration of those gentlemen who think they can find a security against any attempt on the part of the Roman Catholics to recover the forfeited estates, in the argument that Roman Catholics themselves have become purchasers. The next act, Sir, in order to give a more fatal blow to the Protestants, and to make their extirpation more complete, was an Act of Attainder, by which all Protestants of all ranks and degrees, and of all sexes, were attainted of high treason, on the pretence that they were out of the kingdom at the passing of the act. According to Archbishop King, 2,600 were included in the proscription, and the manner of their condemnation was no less unjust than the motive; for Sir R. Nagle, on presenting the act to the King for his assent, informed him, that many in the act were condemned upon such evidence as satisfied the House, the rest upon common fame.

But, Sir, sweeping and comprehensive as these measures were for the extirpation of the Protestant religion, they were not enough to satisfy the Roman Catholics. The Parliament of 1689 proceeds in the spirit of the Catholic Association of 1824, to reform the temporalities of the Church: and we have the definition of Dr. Doyle's reform carried into complete execution by the votes of the Roman Catholic legislature. In the first place, all the diocesan and parish schools,

which had been formed for the encouragement of the Protestant religion, were taken away from the Protestant schoolmasters, and their places were filled up by Roman Catholics. The King exercised his right of regulating the statutes of the university, by dispensing with the oath, and sending a mandamus to the fellows to elect whomsoever he should nominate; he accordingly filled up several fellowships with Papists, and appointed a Popish Priest as provost. An act passed this Parliament, whereby all tithes payable by the Roman Catholics to the Protestant clergy were taken away and given to Popish Priests; and in order to make the recovery of them more easy, and to save the trouble and expense of suing under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction, the Priest might bring his action at common law. The appropriate tithes belonging also to bishops and other dignitaries of the Church were wrested from them and given to the Papists, and the revenues of the vacant bishopricks were also expended in maintaining the Roman Catholic clergy.

But, Sir, it was not enough to deprive the Protestant clergy of the means of maintenance, the jurisdiction of the Church was also destroyed by an act of the same Parliament, and all Dissenters were declared free from the punishments, cognizable in the ecclesiastical courts; but as the finishing stroke to the Protestant religion, and the most effectual specimen of the reform which Dr. Doyle has so much at heart, an act of this same Parliament deprived the Protestants of their churches, and the cathedral of Christ Church in Dublin, with twenty-six churches in that diocese, were immediately seized by the Roman Catholics; orders were sent to the provinces for the same purposes, and no doubt every church in Ireland would have been in their possession, if the career of this Roman Catholic Parliament had not been stopped by the battle of the Boyne.

Why, Sir, do I mention these events? It may be said, that the revival of these circumstances serves only to rip open old wounds, and to perpetuate the unfortunate causes of irritation which have so long agitated Ireland. I have no such intention; I wish they could, but they will not be for-

gotten; and when, Sir, my right honourable and learned friend the Attorney General for Ireland (Mr. Plunkett) appeals to history, and in his forcible diction says, that it is nothing better than an old almanack, unless we take warning from its illustrations and examples, I am forced, unwillingly forced, to draw my inference of Roman Catholic principles from Roman Catholic precedents, and to confess that I cannot view the Roman Catholic petition of 1824 as anything but the corollary of the acts of the Roman Catholic Parliament of 1689.

Upon the whole, Sir, I will not give my vote in support of the present bill; I am not convinced that the Roman Catholic disabilities are the causes of the moral and physical degradation of the people of Ireland; no doubt they form a strong ingredient in the national discontent, but the concession of power to the Roman Catholics will only change the sources of discontent, it will leave the struggle for power more formidable, more bitter than it is at present, and it will finally end in the overthrow of the Protestant Establishment. In my opinion, I have only to make a choice between two evils. I prefer, Sir, the Protestant Establishment, because it has led to the glory and prosperity of England, because it has conferred blessings upon Ireland wherever it has been fostered, and because it comprehends now the soundest, the most industrious, the most loyal portion of the kingdom. I dread Roman Catholicism because it is hostile to the spirit of the British Constitution, and I think it my duty to raise my voice to warn the House against encouraging for a third or fourth time the introduction of a political and religious system, which the wisdom of our forefathers considered fatal to the liberties of the country. The monster, now, Sir, like the Trojan horse, threatens to introduce danger and destruction into the very vitals of the Constitution, and I trust, Sir, that I will not have occasion to exclaim, in the words of the Roman poet,—

“ Quater ipso in limine portæ,
Substitit, atque utero sonitum quater arma dedere.
Instamus tamen immemores, cæcique furore,
Et monstrum infelix, sacratâ sistimus arce.”

S P E E C H

OF

G E O R G E R O B E R T D A W S O N , E S Q .

M. P. FOR DERRY AND UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE.

SINCE the Roman Catholic Association has been re-organized—since similar proceedings—the assessing an impost on the people—the encouraging a partial census of the population—its members discussing the general policy of the nation—and promulgating intolerant speeches and manifestoes—equally distinguish the “New” imperious body, as that of the lately suppressed Association, it cannot but be deemed prudent to insert here, the following constitutional, eloquent, argumentative, and truly Protestant oration, delivered in the House of Commons, February 14th, 1825, by GEORGE ROBERT DAWSON, ESQ. M. P. for Derry, and Under Secretary of State, on Mr. Goulburn’s motion for leave to bring in a “Bill to amend certain Acts relating to Unlawful Societies in Ireland.”

SIR.—After the long discussion which the motion of my right honourable friend has undergone, I think it neither decorous nor necessary to detain the House very long with the expression of my opinion; I am anxious, however, to explain the reasons of my vote, and I shall endeavour to do so as concisely as possible, by avoiding an unnecessary allusion to the general question of Roman Catholic emancipation. In the many eloquent speeches which have preceded me, at least one half of the time has been consumed in discussing, not the conduct or effect of the Catholic Association, but the merits of the Roman Catholic question, and in the same proportion that reason and argument have been wanting to support the opposition to my right honourable friend’s motion, so appeals to the passions, and the powers of imagination, have been applied to excite the feelings and divert the judgment from its proper subject. I shall abstain, therefore, Sir, from following such examples, and shall con-

fine myself to this observation with respect to the Roman Catholic question, that every passing event, and every proceeding of the Roman Catholics, confirm me still more strongly in the opinion which I have always maintained—that a further concession to their claims is incompatible with the safety of our constitution.

With respect, Sir, to the question before the House, it seems to me that no man who understands the Irish character, that no man who has read the History of Ireland with common attention, that no man who has watched the progress of events in that country for the last thirty years, can conscientiously stand up and support associations of any kind whatsoever. From the earliest period associations have been the curse of Ireland. In no country has the division of the inhabitants been so marked, so decided, so indelible, as in Ireland. The division between the Irish and the English has descended, under various denominations, through seven centuries; party has followed party, faction has followed faction, and the whole history of the country, which unfortunately presents one continued series of blood, massacre, and misery, is an ample illustration of the danger of ungovernable parties; besides the character of an Irishman, is of all others, the least suited for such a trial. Rash and impetuous in his passions, he obeys only the impulse of the moment; his natural susceptibility lays him open to the power of any demagogue who makes the strongest appeal to his imagination; his actions follow the impulse of this feeling, and if reflection comes at all, it is only from the bitter fruit of disappointment and defeat. It is to me, therefore, Sir, a source of the greatest satisfaction, that it has been resolved to check this evil by putting down all kinds of associations: all kinds, because, though the Catholic Association is the most dangerous, the most mischievous, and the most unconstitutional, which has ever been begot in that country, yet the cure will be incomplete unless the spirit of association be rooted out altogether.

Let any man consider for a moment, Sir, the character of popular assemblies in Ireland, and, with but one exception,

he will find the result invariably the same, namely, ruin and destruction to the actors, disgrace and infamy to the country. The only exception to this miserable catalogue, is the convention of the volunteers in 1782. That assembly, without doubt, accomplished great and glorious deeds, and deserves the gratitude of every friend of my country, and of liberty; but the national restlessness was nearly breaking forth even in this assembly, and a civil war between the volunteers and the parliament was prevented only by the firmness and prudence of Lord Charlemont, who determined to withdraw himself from the convention, after it had obtained the first object for which it was constituted. The convention followed his prudent advice, and it dissolved itself just at the critical time, when the volunteers on one side, and the government on the other, were prepared for a contest to decide the question of parliamentary reform. But with this exception, the history of every popular assembly in Ireland is tragical and disgraceful. What was the result of the Catholic Committee in 1793? What was the result of the Society of United Irishmen in 1796 and 97? A most bloody rebellion; a rebellion that laid waste the country from the north to the south, ruined thousands of families, and reduced the kingdom to the lowest state of misery and degradation. What was the result of the Catholic Board in 1812 and 13; almost a continued interruption of the public tranquillity from that time to this. The most violent exasperation of one party against the other. The consequent effects of that exasperation, a servile war, robbery, murder, and assassination, accompanied with the necessary preventions, namely, Peace Preservation Acts, Suspension of the Habeas Corpus, Constabulary Acts, and Insurrection Acts.

This, Sir, is the history of all popular assemblies in Ireland; but I should leave the catalogue unfinished, if, in the list of popular assemblies, I omit to mention the name of the Irish Parliament. Let any man look at the extraordinary acts of this body of the collective wisdom of the country, twenty-four or twenty-five folio volumes of statutes in which human ingenuity seems stretched to the utmost point to find

out what is not suited to the circumstances of the country, to multiply law upon law without care for their present execution, without foresight for their future effect. Look at the constant character of these legislators, corrupt and venal jobbers, the ready tools of every minister, ready to sell themselves and their country to the highest bidder; but, Sir, thank God, this parliament is annihilated, and better days have already begun to dawn upon Ireland from its connection with this country. It seems, therefore, upon a general principle, that no man who is a friend to the peace or character of my country, can object to a law which puts down political associations of every kind whatsoever.

The motives, Sir, which bind these associations together, can make no difference in the decision of the legislature, all must be put down to ensure the tranquillity of the country; and though I shall always maintain that there is the greatest difference between the principles and conduct of the Orangemen and the Roman Catholics, yet I will never become the advocate of compelling one party to submit, and allowing the other party to escape from the operation of a general law, which is necessary for the peace of the country. If I could be so blind to the principles of common justice, I cannot be insensible to this plain truth, that one association begets another, and that the strongest argument against the existence of Orange-lodges arises from the encouragement which they afford to the continuance of the Catholic Association. I think, therefore, Sir, that I act consistently in voting for a law which puts down, not only the turbulent and seditious efforts of the Catholic Association to disturb the peace of the country, but which prevents the misguided loyalty of the Protestant from any exuberant display of devotion; but I cannot admire the consistency of the honourable gentlemen opposite, who vote for the immediate annihilation of every Orange lodge, without the proof of any charge except the oath of secrecy, and yet oppose the extinction of the Catholic Association, whose acts no man yet has been bold enough to justify.

The complacency and levity, Sir, with which this incon-

sistent conduct is justified is almost ridiculous. Who can forget the parade and pomp with which the honourable and learned gentleman, the member for Calne (Mr. Abercromby) introduced his motion to put down Orange lodges? Who can forget the violent speeches and the opprobrious epithets which were used against every person connected with the Orange party? Who can forget the shouts of triumph which followed the discovery of the honourable member for Waterford (Sir John Newport), that the members of an Orange lodge subscribed three-pence each to buy pens and paper, in order to record the proceedings of the evening? But, Sir, these arguments were successful, and every well-wisher of my country consented to join in crushing the Orange lodges.

But, what is their conduct now? In the speech from the throne, a distinct recommendation is given to heal the evils of Ireland by pulling down all kinds of associations. It is distinctly proved, Sir, that the Catholic Association has assumed a form inconsistent with the principles of the Constitution; that it usurps the functions of government; that it exasperates party hatred; that it interferes with the administration of justice; that it calumniates the character of every respectable man in the country; that it paralyses the magistracy; that it keeps the people, through the instrumentality of the Priests, in a state of servile vassalage, ready to obey their orders, however dangerous; and that it levies a tax upon the people, to be converted to their own mischievous purposes, no matter what they are. All this is proved, is as evident as the sun at noon-day; and yet the honourable gentlemen refuse to check the career of this dangerous association. They still, Sir, continue to hurl their anathemas against Orange lodges, when in fact there are no Orange lodges in existence; at least I will state for the satisfaction of the honourable member for Wicklow, who seems to think Derry the focus of all Orangeism, that there are no Orange lodges in that city. They still continue to laud the peaceable, mild, and tranquillizing conduct of the leaders of the Catholic Association, and to condemn Lord O'Neill for not

abandoning his political principles. They justify Mr. O'Connell and others for driving their country almost into a state of rebellion by their inflammatory speeches; but they can find no excuse for Lord O'Neill's continuing stedfast to the principles of his family. Can any man blame Lord O'Neill for seeking protection in the times of peril through which we have passed? Can any man blame him for wishing to know who are his friends, and who are his foes? His father found himself deceived in the appeal which he made to the humanity of a neighbouring dependant. He found kindness forgotten, and all the kindly feelings of nature destroyed by the poison of political hatred; and can we, or ought we, to blame the son who seeks only to know those to whom he can trust? (Loud cheering.)

But, Sir, my objection to the Catholic Association is founded upon much stronger reasons than upon an objection in principle to associations. It appears to me to be the most dangerous and most mischievous body which has ever been suffered to exist in Ireland. Its proceedings, the speeches of its members, the agency of the Priests, all unite to make it the most dangerous engine to work upon the passions of such a susceptible people as the Irish. It commands a paid press to circulate its poison through every part of the country, it has orators who stick at no falsehood to alienate the people from their confidence in every established institution of the country, it has associated in its labours the Priesthood, who have amply repaid the expectation of the Association, by their undisguised expressions of hostility to the Constitution of the empire, and by their unceasing efforts to instil the same hatred into the ignorant and infatuated peasantry.

Now, Sir, many honourable gentlemen have said, that they see no harm in the proceedings of the Association, and that the speeches of their leaders, like all violent harangues, are soon forgotten. But, Sir, the Catholic Association takes care, that the effect of their speeches shall not be confined to those who hear them; the auditors perhaps know their leaders too well to be much affected by their orations; but when these speeches are sent down to every little village in

the country, when every institution in Church and State, when the highest characters, both in England and Ireland, are held up to public odium, when the ecclesiastical bench, the judicial bench, the magistracy, the Parliament, the laws of the land, are calumniated and misrepresented, when rebels, who have suffered from the offended laws of their country, receive public thanks, when the people are encouraged to unite in one general system to pull down every establishment in the kingdom, these speeches are not to be judged by the character of the speakers, but by the effects which they produce upon a credulous and ignorant people. It will hardly be believed to what an extent this violence has been carried; and as I have no means of judging of the intentions of the gentlemen who deliver their sentiments in the Catholic Association but by their speeches, as I have no means of ascertaining the object of the Association but by its proceedings, I shall endeavour to explain the impression which is made upon my mind by a few extracts from them.

What says the Finance Report, which was published in the early part of the last year, before the rent became as successful as it is at present, and 50,000 copies of which were circulated through the country? "It exhorts the people to wait in the sullen silence of discontent for a more favourable opportunity and better organized resources, to prove to Britain and the world that we are men, and deserve to be free."—This language is plain enough, Sir, it breathes the spirit of disaffection, and of disappointment at not having the power to carry these designs into execution.

But what says Mr. O'Connell a short time afterwards, when the rent became more abundant, and when the means were daily accumulating of arming and organizing the peasantry? He says, "He would not press the introduction of the claim of arming the Roman Catholics, for if he did, it might be supposed that they were going to proclaim war at once." Now, Sir, this sounds very ridiculous in this House, but I should like to ask what is the effect produced upon the mind of a Roman Catholic peasant in Kerry by this language? Does it not prepare him, ay and every

Roman Catholic peasant in Ireland, to expect that some great design is in agitation, and does it not prepare him to put into execution another favourite exclamation of the same gentleman, "Hereditary bondsmen, know you not, who would be free, themselves must strike the blow?" This may be called figurative language, the exuberance of eloquence, of a heated imagination and so forth; but the Roman Catholic peasant sees in it good practical matter, and would not be sorry to have it brought to the test of experience. I could read many other passages in the same strain; but it is enough that such sentiments are uttered and circulated with assiduity among the people, to convince any one that the assembly from which they emanate is most dangerous and unconstitutional.

And what, Sir, is the language of the Association in reviewing the conduct of such members of either House of Parliament, as venture to express any sentiments unfavourable to the Roman Catholics; all courtesy, all moderation is abandoned, and the liberty of speaking our thoughts is represented as the highest crime against the majority of the Roman Catholic people; one gentleman (Mr. Shiel) says, that "if the British legislature require the degradation of a whole people from the enjoyment of its advantages, that it is the asylum of intolerance," and so on. When Lord Redesdale states in the House of Lords that he shall freely give his opinion upon the Roman Catholic question, and shall not be deterred by the fact, that his assassination was preached from the altar, by a Priest in Dublin, the Association immediately decree that the assertion is calumnious, and not only calumnious but an assassinating calumny. His Royal Highness the Duke of York exposed himself also to the assaults of the Roman Catholic Association, by his observations on the Roman Catholic claims. He is represented in a report from the Association, which was circulated throughout the country, as an enemy to the Irish people; and when one gentleman wished to have the expression softened, Mr. O'Connell refused, declared that it was just, and that the heir apparent ought not to forget that there was once a Duke

of York who lost his crown and kingdom. Another orator observed, "that by the public expression of their sentiments, the Duke of York might be induced to alter his opinion, as far as related to the Catholics of Ireland, but that his was a life of no service."*

This, Sir, is the tone in which they speak of the Parliament; these are the sentiments which they circulate through every part of the country; I allow, indeed, that such assertions are contemptible, but is it safe, is it just, to allow a slanderous faction to disseminate their poison among a deluded and credulous peasantry?

The same hostility, Sir, pursues every member of the Established Church, wherever an effort has been made to counteract the objections of the Catholic Association. The archbishops, bishops, and clergy of all descriptions, are involved in a general anathema; they are held up to accusation, as plunderers by the Catholic Association, and they are denounced as usurpers by the Roman Catholic clergy. Every act of kindness, of charity, of duty, performed by the Protestant clergy towards the poor of their districts, has been forgotten since the establishment of the Catholic Association. During the severe season of distress in the West of Ireland, in the year 1822, the Archbishop of Tuam, who, with true charity, exerted himself for the relief of the poor, received the following address from Dr. Kelly, the titular Roman Catholic archbishop for the diocese:—

"Resolved, That the judicious, efficient and unwearied exertions of his Grace the Archbishop of Tuam, in the causes of charity, call forth our warmest sentiments of admiration, and we now beg to offer him the humble tribute of our sincere gratitude, hoping that his benignity of character, and his active and well-directed beneficence (qualities worthy of our emulation,) may long continue to shed their influence over us.

"OLIVER KELLY."

* These observations were made in the Catholic Association previous to the period, when the late lamented Duke of York delivered his ever-memorable and Constitutional speech against the Roman Catholic Claims.

At this time, Sir, there was no Catholic Association; but last year, under the baneful influence of this body, which infects and poisons every thing that comes in contact with it, the Roman Catholic clergy of the same diocese published an atrocious and infamous resolution, accusing the Archbishop of having introduced a party of military, with drawn swords, for the purpose of intimidating, and perhaps massacring the Roman Catholic clergy, insidiously invited to a meeting.

But, Sir, not satisfied with every indignity that can be offered personally to the highest dignitaries of the Church; the leader of the Association, at its very last meeting, gave to a people, already through the agency of their Priests, worked up to the highest state of fanatical hatred against the members of the Established Church, the humane hint of massacring them by wholesale. At the last meeting, Mr. O'Connell said, "Scotland did not exhibit the patience and self-controul of Ireland, nor patiently suffer herself to be trampled on, while her oppressors rode by in triumph. She hewed down with the sword of the Lord the archbishops and bishops, and when the force of the British arms became too strong for her people, they retired to their mountains, and after renovating their vigour they returned to carry desolation to the very dwelling of their assailants."

Now, Sir, does such language as this require any comment? To whom is it addressed? not to the Association, but to the Roman Catholic peasantry, the most ignorant, the most deluded peasantry in the world, and unfortunately the most ready tools for any work of blood.

The same observations apply, Sir, to those who are intrusted with the administration of justice. The chancellor, the judges, the magistrates, all come in for their share of abuse. There is an exception, indeed, in favour of those who are known to entertain opinions favourable to the Roman Catholic cause; but the honest and conscientious assertion of an adverse opinion, no matter how amiable in private, and how pure in public life the individual may be, is sufficient to have him represented by the Roman Catholic press, in every cabin in Ireland, as a tyrant and a despot.

In speaking of the chancellor of Ireland, Mr. O'Connell says that "the chancellorship of Lord Manners, and the attorney-generalship of Mr. Saurin, tended to degrade the dignity and sully the independence of a bar, which had given a tone to the public feeling of Ireland." Sir, the bar of Ireland rejects the hypocritical compliment; the dignified characters who adorn it, the judges Burton, Jebb, Bushe, and Pennefather, find more honour in being associated with such men as Lord Manners and Mr. Saurin, than in all the hypocritical cant of the Catholic Association.

Again, Sir, what is their language respecting the magistracy? that "the administration of justice in Ireland is corrupted at its very source; that a simple despotism weighs with an equality of pressure upon every class of the community; that the sense of masterdom mingles itself in the ordinary familiarities of life, and that the administration of justice is partial, vindictive, and unjust." Sir, if any one of these assertions were true, the laws afford an ample remedy to the party aggrieved. But redress is not the object of the Catholic Association; it is more to their purpose to instil these dangerous falsehoods into the minds of the peasantry, and to prepare them, by undermining their confidence in every establishment, for deeds of aggression whenever they shall be proposed.

But, Sir, besides the speeches of the leaders, we may infer from the proceedings of the Association, what great respect is entertained for the laws of the country. On the 24th of November, a Mr. Devereux and Mr. Hamilton Rowan, were both admitted as members of the Association, and the announcement of their names was received with thunders of applause. The reason of this enthusiastic admiration is curious enough. Mr. Devereux was announced to be the almost only surviving delegate to the Catholic Committee in 1793, and he was admitted immediately by Mr. O'Connell, as a matter of course, in that capacity; in other words, he was admitted because he belonged to an assembly which was declared to be illegal, and which was put down by law. The case of Mr. Hamilton Rowan is more notorious; and here

I beg to express my regret at being obliged to renew the recollection of events long passed, and which certainly would have been buried in oblivion, so far as I am concerned, except for the indiscretion of the individuals themselves: they, not I, must be responsible for raking up the records of ancient and troublesome times. But Mr. Hamilton Rowan has made himself too notorious to be passed over in silence; he was secretary to the Society of United Irishmen; was actually convicted of sedition, and whilst in prison, he was attainted of high treason. His associate in treason, the Rev. Mr. Jackson, was tried and convicted, but put an end to his life in prison. Mr. Rowan was more fortunate; for he escaped from prison, and suffered exile for many years from Ireland. After a long lapse, he was allowed to return to his native home, by the indulgence of the government; and the best reward he can make for this clemency, is by becoming a member of an Association as dangerous and unconstitutional as that of the United Irishmen; and what is still more remarkable, and tending to show the spirit of the Catholic Association, the accession of this attainted traitor was received with thunders of applause; and in the address presented to him, direct allusion is made to those circumstances of his life, in which he plotted against the peace and laws of his country, as deserving of the applause and gratitude of his Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen.

Now, Sir, it is impossible to mark proceedings of this kind, without contemplating the result of these transactions. Why is every violent sentiment applauded? Why is every dangerous man received as an useful ally? Why is such publicity given to these mischievous sentiments? The object is plain; it is to alienate the people from their attachment to their rulers, to disgust them with the laws, and to prepare them for the overthrow of the Protestant religion.

But much, Sir, as I condemn the existence of the Catholic Association, I think it would be comparatively innocent in its operation, if it was not for the agency of the Roman Catholic Priesthood. To the conduct of the Priesthood I attribute most part of the evils which have desolated Ireland for so

long a period. I regret to be obliged to make this avowal, but these are times when the truth must be told, and when a delicate forbearance may prove an everlasting injury to the country. It is my misfortune, Sir, to differ entirely from my right honourable friend below me, the Attorney General for Ireland, in my opinion of the Priesthood.

In their conduct, Sir, during the last five or six years, I have seen very little to approve of, but a great deal to condemn; and I can view their alliance with the Catholic Association, in no other light than as the first step towards the attainment of their grand object, the overthrow of the Protestant Church, and the ascendancy of the Roman Catholic religion in Ireland. Their prelates can no longer refrain from expressing their anticipation of this long-wished-for feast. Dr. Curtis, the titular primate of Ireland, informs the Archbishop of Dublin, that he is an usurper, that he held his archiepiscopal chair by sufferance, and that he is no more entitled to it than he is to the dukedom of Leeds. Dr. Doyle says, in his letter to Mr. Robertson, a member of this House, "that the whole body of the Catholics is impatient, that disaffection must be working within them, that the ministers of the Establishment are and will be detested, that if a rebellion were raging from Carrickfergus to Cape Clear, no sentence of excommunication would be fulminated by a Catholic prelate, and that the Catholics possessed of property in Ireland, will not render any efficient services to the government, should eventful times occur; that from such men the government has only to expect defiance and open hostility." Another Priest, a Mr. L'Estrange, declares, "it ought not to be expected that the Catholic clergy, who have a divine right, were bound to meet men not dignified with the same exalted character: perhaps all the gentlemen present (this was uttered in the Catholic Association) were not aware, that they, the Roman Catholic clergy, deny any character whatever to the bishops, or other clergy of the Protestant Church."

This, Sir, is the denunciation of the Roman Catholic clergy—it is fulminated from the altar, it is reported to the

Association, it is read in every cabin in Ireland, as a useful lesson to the rising generation, to cultivate obedience and resignation to the established laws of the country. But, Sir, it is said, that we are indebted for the present tranquillity to the Roman Catholic clergy; I really believe so, but I believe also, that we are indebted for the late disorders to the same persons. I recollect in a trial which took place in the county of Cork, before Mr. Blacker, who presided as King's Counsel, under the Insurrection Act, that Mr. Blacker asked a Roman Catholic Priest if he was aware of the disturbed state of his parish. The Priest, with considerable reluctance, confessed that he was aware of it; and being pressed by Mr. Blacker, he allowed that no plot could be in agitation without his knowledge, and moreover, that every priest in Ireland must be aware of what is going on, if he does his duty. I recollect also, that a Priest of the name of O'Sullivan, saw a man murdered before his face, and refused to give evidence against the murderer, because, if he did so, he would lose his influence with his parishioners. I think myself, therefore, Sir, justified in saying, that the Priests contributed to the continuance of the disorders which prevailed during the last four years, by not coming forward to cooperate with the gentry of the country for their extinction. If the tranquillity of Ireland is now owing to their exhortations, the disturbances of 1820, of 1821, of 1822, and 1823, were owing to their want of exhortation.

The influence of the Priest, Sir, over the Irish peasant, is well known. By the terrors of the church he can frighten him into good or evil habits, and the extraordinary and fanatical devotion of the wretched peasant, in giving the miserable pittance which he had destined to cover his own nakedness, or to feed his starving children, to give it, at the orders of the Priests, to the Catholic Association, is a strong proof how much good may be effected by them, if the inclination be as strong to do good as it is to do evil.

In a letter from Mr. Duggan, the Parish Priest of Kilrush, published in the proceedings of the Catholic Association, he says, "Many of them (his parishioners) have sworn to appropriate the whole of the corn-crop to the payment of the rent,

no matter what other creditors may be justly entitled to, or even the wants of nature may imperiously demand." Who, Sir, but a person of the most perverted understanding, could encourage such a practice; what clergyman of real morality would recommend the withholding of a just payment, in order to provide for some undefined object; what man of real morality would recommend robbery to encourage sedition? Another Priest, a Mr. Kelly, of Mallow, advises his parishioners to contribute largely, because money is the sinew of war, and because the Catholic rent will supply the Association with those sinews, whenever the proper occasion shall present itself. Hundreds of examples of a similar kind may be adduced, to show the disposition of the Roman Catholic Priesthood; and in every public occurrence the mischiefs of their disastrous influence may be traced.

Who is it, Sir, that is employed to sow distrust between the clergyman and his parishioners?—the Priests. Who is it that bursts without remorse all the ties of connexion between the landlord and the tenant?—the Priests. Who leads on contending parties at elections, and, in addition to political animosity, throws on the fuel of religious hatred; who impedes the course of education, and blasts the efforts of the most benevolent individuals for the civilization of their tenantry?—It is the Priests. In every situation, in every character, the Priest appears as a foe, unless the object to be obtained conduces to the advancement of his own power; and what is the object of the Priesthood in thus standing aloof from any intermixture with the Protestants?—It is to establish their own Church upon the ruins of the Protestant Establishment; this is his dream by night, and his thought by day; for this he leagues himself with the Catholic Association; for this he employs his influence over the people, to devote their money and their persons to the command of that imperious body. If such a state of things is suffered to exist, Sir, there can be but one result, a contest between the two parties; and, unless the Government is supported by Parliament, to extinguish the Association, the Association, with the Priesthood, will soon extinguish the Government. (Loud and long-continued cheering.)

S P E E C H

OF

HIS GRACE THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY.

WHEN a Motion was made in the House of Lords, May 13th, 1805, "for taking into consideration the Petition of the Roman Catholics of Ireland;" his Grace the Lord ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, thus addressed the House.

MY LORDS.—Before you consent to resolve yourselves into a committee, for the purpose of considering in what manner you can best carry into execution the prayer of the petition, entitled, "the Petition of the Roman Catholics whose names are subscribed," it will surely be matter of prudence to inquire, whether the principle upon which the petition rests, is such as your lordships can safely admit. If, my lords, in this inquiry, it shall appear, that under no possible modification can the principle and substance of the petition be conceded, without danger to the Establishment in Church and State, your lordships will hardly be disposed to employ your time, and talents, in devising the best possible means for the downfall of both.

What then, my lords, is the history, and what the substance of the petition? I cannot help considering the petition as the consequence, and natural consequence, of a long series of concessions, obtained by the Roman Catholics of Ireland, during the present reign; of which series, the subject matter of the petition, if granted, would assuredly not constitute the ultimate term. I beg to be distinctly understood as in no degree calling into question the wisdom of those concessions. Many of them, in my judgment, were absolutely necessary, most of them extremely reasonable, and perhaps all of them in policy expedient. I advert to them only to discover the causes that have led to the petition in its present form.

My Lords.—The Roman Catholics have obtained all that belongs to toleration. After the 18th of his Majesty, which removed from the Roman Catholics the restraints that affected the grant and acceptance of leases, and provided against the consequences of the conformity of the son with the Established Church, so far as those consequences concerned the estates of the Roman Catholic parent; blotting for ever from the Irish statute book, that corrupt and unhallowed motive of conversion: after the 22d of his Majesty, which enabled the Roman Catholic, on taking the oath of allegiance, to purchase and dispose of lands in like manner as his Majesty's Protestant subjects, and on the same terms, freed the ecclesiastic of that persuasion from the pains and penalties of former acts; after the statute of the same year, authorizing Roman Catholics to teach schools, and giving new facilities to the guardianship of Roman Catholic children: after the 32d of his Majesty, which removed disqualifications from lawyers and attorneys of that persuasion, sanctioned the intermarriages of Protestants with Roman Catholics, and repealed laws that prohibited foreign, and embarrassed domestic education: after the 33d of his Majesty, which was said to have left the Roman Catholic nothing to ask (and well might the assertion be credited), after the 33d of his Majesty, which swept from the Irish statute book almost all the disqualifications of that description of his Majesty's subjects, modelled the oath of allegiance to the taste and scruples of the Roman Catholics; put down the oath of abjuration, the declaration, the sacramental test, and enabled the Roman Catholics to vote at elections, to hold commissions of the peace, to execute offices civil and military, and to enjoy all manner of places of trust and emolument, except such as relate to the Established Church, and such as are expressly specified in the body of the act; after this long string of statutes, each of which, in its turn, was supposed to comprehend and redress all that was of grievance among them, follows, the petition which is now on your lordships' table. It is for your lordships to

determine, in your characters of statesmen and legislators, to what extent these concessions can with safety be carried.

The substance of the petition is compressed, for your lordships' use and convenience, into one short, but pregnant sentence: "an equal participation on equal terms of the full benefits of the British laws and Constitution." If I be at liberty to understand the sentence according to the ordinary acceptation of the words, I may answer that such participation is already possessed; but the framers of the petition, who are doubtless the best commentators of their own work, will not suffer me so to interpret them. Equal participation on equal terms, in their language, signifies, admission to places of power and trust, without giving that security for the due discharge of them, which is demanded and given of your lordships, and every other subject of the realm.

The object of the petition, my lords, couched in very decent and moderate terms, is, nevertheless, of great size and importance. It is no less than a request on the part of the Roman Catholics, to legislate for a Protestant country, to dispense the laws, to command the armies and navies, and to take share in the executive councils of a Protestant kingdom: a request that strikes at the principles of the Revolution, and by plain, broad, and inevitable consequences calls into question the justice and policy of the Act of Settlement. Such, in my view of it, is the history, and such the substance of the petition on your lordships' table.

My Lords.—The noble baron who, on a former night, moved the question, and who never rises in this House without making deep impression upon it, endeavoured to connect and implicate the substance of the petition with the general principles of toleration. I insist, my lords, that I am as sincerely attached to the genuine principles of toleration as any one of your lordships. I consider it as the brightest ornament and fairest grace of the Reformed Church which is established in this kingdom: but *I cannot prevail upon myself to confound toleration with equality, much less with power and eventual superiority. It is not a figure of rhetoric, but a plain fact, resting on historical evidence, that*

toleration is a virtue which grows naturally out of a sense of security, and cannot exist for a moment, where danger is apprehended.

If your lordships should determine to destroy those fences which the wisdom and experience of our ancestors have, with so much deliberation and care, erected around the Established Church, you will do unintentionally, without doubt, but in my judgment effectually, all that is in our power to excite and provoke that bad spirit of animosity and religious intolerance that marked and disgraced the worst pages of our history, subsequent to the Reformation. On these grounds, my lords, I feel it my duty to resist the motion of going into a committee to consider the substance of the petition.

SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND LORD BISHOP OF LONDON.

ON the order of the day for the second reading of the "Roman Catholic Bill," being read April 16, 1821, and a few Peers having delivered their sentiments, the Right Honourable and Reverend WILLIAM HOWLEY, D. D. LORD BISHOP OF LONDON, rose and addressed their Lordships.

MY LORDS.—On the present occasion I cannot reconcile it to my feelings to pursue the same course which I have followed on former occasions when this subject was under your lordships' consideration, namely, to express my dissent by a silent vote. The question comes now before us in a shape which is entitled to our most respectful attention, for it comes in a legislative form from the other House of Parliament.

Against such a bill, my lords, it becomes now my duty to state my conscientious objections. I mean to offer an oppo-

sition, not only to the principle of the measure, but also to the details, as embodied in the present form of the bill. In taking this course, I beg to disclaim all hostile or illiberal feelings towards the Roman Catholic body, for such I have never entertained; on the contrary, my feelings and principles were ever to grant to all classes of my fellow-subjects the full exercise of their religion, without molestation or insult, while that religion contains nothing repugnant to morals or decency.

To the Roman Catholics, my lords, I have been always ready to grant the unfettered enjoyment of their form of worship, the free disposition of their property, the fullest personal protection, and an equal security under the laws. Beyond these is political power, and if I cannot grant that, it is from a sincere apprehension for the safety of the Protestant Establishment. I am ready to admit the loyalty of the Roman Catholics, and particularly those of England, whose peaceable dispositions and order have been for a century remarkable; and if any agitation had taken place among the Roman Catholics of Ireland, I am sensible it was often attributable to the peculiar state of that country, a state which I think no peculiar foresight at the time would have remedied, and for which no immediate remedy could by any measure be applied.

My great objection, however, my lords, is to the religious principle of the Roman Catholics—to that which requires, on their part, unlimited submission to a foreign authority—an authority which assumes unlimited dominion over the consciences—excluding from them all exercise of their own reason—regarding all matters of religion. It is a principle of that religion to regard all dissent in spiritual matters as rebellious contumacy, and to require of its votaries the uniform advocacy of her interest and power. This is the genuine doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, as avowed by her orthodox sons.

If, then, such be its character, my lords, it follows that no oath or contract clashing with that spirit of discipline, can be deemed by a Roman Catholic as lawful or valid, and cer-

tainly none can be understood as being taken, without a reservation of the nature I have alluded to. This reservation is implied in all the oaths or obligations of Roman Catholics, and it pervades every part of their religious policy. The Protestant makes no such reservation; his salvo is with his God, while that of the Roman Catholic is alone with his church, as a fixed rule and imperative measure of duty.

My Lords.—It is this mental reservation which weighs upon my mind, and which must have equally impressed the minds of those eminent and illustrious statesmen, who, at the time of the Revolution, saw no security for the liberties of their country, but in making its government essentially Protestant, and excluding from the prominent offices therein those who professed the Roman Catholic religion. It is on this principle that the Protestants of the throne are secured, and that the King is bound by the law to sacrifice any choice of a Roman Catholic wife. Indeed, the same principle is so far recognized in this bill, that, notwithstanding concessions, it expressly excludes Roman Catholics from eligibility to fill the offices of Lord Chancellor and Lord Lieutenant of Ireland. It proscribes the Roman Catholic from advising the Sovereign in matters touching the religion of the state; while it permits him to form a part of the legislature which is to make laws for the empire. It disallows Roman Catholicity to the King and his immediate representative; while it allows Roman Catholic governors of colonies who must necessarily have considerable control over matters calculated to affect the Protestant Church.

The great predominating evil of this bill is, my lords, that it divests the Established Church of the friendly and direct countenance and support of a Protestant government. I hope that your lordships will never give consent to a measure so vitally altering the controlling principle of every branch of Government at home and abroad.

It is said that this measure will allay the agitation which prevails in Ireland. I think differently, and cannot concur in ascribing to it such healing effect. On the contrary, I think great alarm will be naturally excited among the Protestants

by this sudden transfer of so much power and influence to an adverse party.

There is no reason whatever, my lords, for supposing that this bill will give satisfaction to the Roman Catholics of Ireland; it will work no material alteration in the actual condition of the great body of the people, for they can derive no sensible addition of privileges by its adoption: a few alone in the higher classes are likely to be advanced by it. Of the Roman Catholic hierarchy I wish to speak with all possible respect; but, like all other men, they must be considered liable to human passions, and I can never believe they will abandon all hopes of resuming the eminence they once enjoyed in the State, of repossessing that power and those privileges which they much persuade themselves they have lost by an unhallowed usurpation.

The laical parts of the bill are comprehensive and unrestricted; it is the clergy who are alone alarmed and offended at the view taken of their situation in this bill; and yet this hostile feeling is induced by the provisos of a bill professedly conciliatory in its intended object. Those whom the legislature mean to propitiate are by the act of propitiation rendered still more alarmed and hostile to the measure. While, on the other hand, the Protestants, for whom the securities are intended, are hardly satisfied with the reserved restrictions, and have in their turn their feelings roused against the bill.

My Lords.—Upon the securities contained in the bill, I beg to say a few words. If we are prepared, as the bill imports, to recognize the appointment of a Roman Catholic hierarchy, and to legalize their intercourse with the See of Rome, I think it not unreasonable to expect that the Roman Catholics ought to be ready, in their turn, to concede some power of restricting or regulating the appointment of that hierarchy, and of examining the mode of maintaining that intercourse. It should always be remembered that the danger to be apprehended is not likely to arise in the shape of open rebellion, but in the silent and certain changes which influence would work when Roman Catholics have a power

in the legislature, and an immediate concern in the government of the country. It is influence we have to dread, and an influence of a description against which no human wisdom, if those restrictions be withdrawn, can provide an effectual bar.

Respecting that part of the bill, my lords, which incorporates an explanation with the oath of supremacy, I do not think that the oath provided by the bill, which disclaims undivided allegiance, is a sufficient substitute for the form of oath which has been withdrawn, to make room for it. The only way of clearing up this part of the projected arrangement would be for the Roman Catholics at once to give a full explanation of what they understand, in the way of distinction between civil and spiritual jurisdiction. This ought to have been done in the first instance; I must altogether protest against any ambiguity in the language of the oath. Lord Clarendon declared, "that the attributing any power to the Pope, or acknowledging any to be in him, of how *spiritual* a nature soever it is thought to be, shall be enough to give law to the *temporal*, when a spiritual end shall so direct it."

My Lords.—I think it quite clear, that when it is proposed to your lordships to make so great an alteration in the constitution as the present bill involves, it should be understood that the alteration is to be accompanied by securities as permanent as the intended duration of the privileges to be conceded. Is this the case with the bill? It concedes everything to the laity, unaccompanied with the restrictions; and it affixes securities to ecclesiastical regulations, which it is quite clear, from the language used by the Roman Catholic clergy, if carried, we must eventually be compelled to abandon.

This being my view of the case, my lords, it is impossible I can countenance such a bill; it furnishes no adequate securities for the safety of the Protestant government, while it proposes at once to withdraw from the Church and the State those barriers which our ancestors fenced round our glorious constitution. I cannot consent to sever the bonds

of national security provided by our ancestors; I cannot consent to remodel that structure which has been settled on the basis of a pure religion, and upon views of state policy of the soundest kind, as has been subsequently shown by the numerous blessings which Providence showered upon the country which has so long acted under its guidance. This is a dangerous experiment; I warn the House how we break in upon a system of policy which has hitherto given the subjects of this great empire an unparalleled enjoyment of civil and political blessings.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER.

WHEN the second reading of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill was moved in the House of Lords, May 17th, 1825, the Right Reverend CHARLES JAMES BLOOMFIELD, D. D. LORD BISHOP OF CHESTER, addressed the House in the following dignified, eloquent, perspicuous, and Constitutional diction.

MY LORDS.—I rise under considerable embarrassment, to the discussion of this question; an embarrassment proceeding not only from the unspeakable importance of the question itself, which, under whatever point of view I contemplate it, presents me only with a choice of evils—but an embarrassment arising from finding myself opposed in opinion to many of those whose virtues I revere and love; whose friendship I hold to be among the most honourable distinctions of my life; whose wisdom I have great reason to respect; and to whose political experience I am sensible that I ought to bow.

But there are acts of duty, my lords, the faithful performance of which costs us a pang, to be compensated only by

the consciousness that they are acts of duty. Whatever my conviction may be on this momentous question, I have at least the satisfaction of knowing that it is a deliberate conviction; the result of much painful research and inquiry; and, in justice to myself, I ought to add, that it is in opposition to my early opinions. The change, indeed, is not of recent date; but I do remember the time, when my mind—imbued with those principles of civil and religious liberty which are interwoven with the very rudiments of education in this country, and disgusted with the severity of the penal code in some of its more hideous features,—was inclined to regard the claims of the Roman Catholics with favour. But when I became more thoroughly acquainted with the doctrines and constitution of the Romish Church, and their absolute incompatibility with those very principles which had led me to favour its pretensions—when I understood not only the importance of an established church, but the impossibility of having any establishment without certain privileges and co-ordinate disabilities—when I reflected upon the evils which Popery, at least, if not the Roman Catholic religion, had inflicted on this country, on Europe, on the world—and when I was thoroughly convinced, as convinced I have long been, that the genius of that ecclesiastical despotism remains essentially unchanged; that if it couches, it slumbers not, but waits the opportunity of re-asserting its energies and grasping at its prey—then, my lords, my opinion was changed; and if aught had been wanting to the fulness of that demonstration by which this change was wrought, I should have found it in the evidence lately laid before your lordships; nay, in those very parts of that evidence, by which, as I understand, some persons have been led to an opposite conclusion, dazzled by a marvellous brightness, outshining the light of history, experience, and common sense.

But, it may be said, my lords—it has been for the tenth time this very night, if not asserted, yet insinuated—that I come to the decision of this momentous question, an interested, and a prejudiced judge; that I come into court with

my eyes blinded, but not for the ends of justice; and with a preponderating weight already cast into one scale.

But, my lords, I ask with confidence—I ask this House, and let the question be repeated to the country—what right has any noble lord, to impute to the Protestant Bishops of England, motives of base and sordid interest, as the main springs of their opposition to this measure? I ask, my lords, what right? I mean, what grounds are there of history or of observation to justify the charge? Were they motives of personal interest, which led the seven bishops to resist the arbitrary measures of a Popish king, to whose person they were zealously attached; and to embrace imprisonment and persecution, rather than deviate from their duty to the Protestant faith? Ambition, it may have been, that just and laudable ambition, which I trust has not ceased to burn in the breasts of their less illustrious successors, the ambition of proving themselves vigilant sentinels and intrepid champions of the Church, and, if need be, martyrs in her cause.

With equal justice might interested motives be imputed to your lordships, the proprietors of vast hereditary domains, when you are sitting in deliberation on the laws, which have been devised and enacted by yourselves, for the protection of what is called “the landed interest.” With equal justice might it be said, that some of the supporters of this bill are swayed by the apprehension of danger to their own possessions. But I pass by such imputations, as unworthy of further notice, and as doing no good service to the cause in which they are employed.

We have heard, my lords—not indeed this evening, although it has been alluded to—but in the previous discussions of this important question, we have heard a great deal of the injustice and cruelty of debarring four or five millions of our fellow-subjects from the enjoyment of their natural and indefeasible rights. Now, as to the principle, it makes no difference, whether it be four millions of men or four, that are deprived of what is said to be every man’s birth-right. I say there is no difference in point of principle, whatever there may be as to political expediency. If, therefore, we

are to argue this question on abstract principle, let the consideration of numbers be put aside, as an element which does not enter into the solution of the problem. If the concessions be just and politic, grant them, were it but to forty; if otherwise, refuse them, even to four millions of claimants.

But, my lords, let us examine the meaning of those words, "debarred of their civil," or, as some have said, "their natural rights." Is there any civil right which individual citizens may not be called upon to forego, if public expediency demands the sacrifice? Is not this a principle, which, in some shape or other, must be recognized under every imaginable form of civil government? In our own constitution, favourable as it is to liberty, it is recognized and acted upon, in a degree, which seems to have been forgotten by those persons who so loudly denounce the injustice of withholding from any class of men a direct share in the actual government of the country; for this, simply this, is the civil right which is the present object of contention.

It seems to me, my lords, I confess, to be as unjust, in the abstract, to exclude a man from the legislature for want of a certain amount of property, as it is, to hold him disqualified, on account of certain opinions which affect the integrity and security of the commonwealth. I really am unable, in this view of the subject, to discriminate between the shades of injustice in the two cases. I know of only one answer which can be given to this argument, which is, that in the one case we have a certain test of qualification, in the other, an uncertain; an answer which does not hold good with respect to the Roman Catholics, whose principles, if they are Roman Catholics indeed, are fixed, certain, and notorious. The fact is, that in both cases, a civil right is concluded and foreclosed, because public expediency requires it.

But further, my lords, this principle is recognized by the supporters of the present bill, and in a manner somewhat extraordinary. The right of electing those who are to legislate for us, is certainly not less sacred than that of having a direct share in the legislation. To take away this privilege, is confessedly a greater violation of natural justice, a more daring inroad into the pale of civil right, than a mere exclu-

sion from the legislature. Yet this is the very injustice, for so arguing on their own principles, I must call it, which the advocates of civil right now propose to commit upon a gigantic scale—by a sort of compensation, which, to my apprehension, throws into the shade the minor solecisms of the penal code. To admit with safety a few favoured persons to the privilege of legislation, you disfranchise three or four hundred thousand, and deprive them of a much more sacred and inalienable right. I give no opinion as to the expediency of that measure, I am only arguing that the ablest advocates of civil right, are compelled to admit in practice, that it is limitable, and may be restricted or withholden altogether.

Nay more, my lords, in the very measure which now awaits your decision, is this principle acknowledged and embodied, for it proposes to continue and perpetuate the exclusion of Roman Catholics from certain offices of trust and power, to which they have as fair a right to aspire, as to a share in your legislative deliberations. Of all judicial situations, that of the Lord High Chancellor may well be the highest object of ambition to a Roman Catholic, and his exclusion from it the greatest grievance; inasmuch as in the decisions of a judge, who is not confined by the trammels of the statute law, but proceeds upon a discretionary equity, there is the greater scope for partiality and prejudice. Yet from this office, my lords, we are told, by one of their own clergy, Mr. Collins, the Roman Catholics would consent to be excluded, on account of the great State-necessity which requires such exclusion. And this great State-necessity he interprets to mean, the general persuasion of the English people that Roman Catholics should be excluded from that high office.

I maintain, therefore, my lords, that upon the plainest principles which regulate civil society, upon the ground of universal and invariable usage, by the admission and enactment of the framers of this bill, civil rights are limitable by expediency; and that a capacity to serve the State in offices of trust and power, which is not limitable by the constitution, where there are just grounds for limitation, is such a capacity as is inconsistent with all the forms of government in the

world. I think, then, my lords, that we have now disposed of the question of right; the next point of inquiry is, whether any opinions can form a just ground of disqualification for civil office.

It has been remarked elsewhere, (with what truth I will not now stay to inquire,) that a man is no more answerable for his opinions, than he is for the colour of his hair, or his constitutional peculiarities. Admitting, for the sake of argument, the justice of this observation, I need hardly remind your lordships, that there are constitutional peculiarities and personal defects, which do, in fact, disqualify a man from holding certain offices. They are his misfortune, not his fault. He is not morally responsible for them, but he must patiently submit to the privation, which, under the existing order of things, they unavoidably bring upon him.

The question then is, my lords, are the opinions held by Roman Catholics of such a nature, as to unfit them for holding offices of trust and power, and more especially for being legislators in a Protestant State?—that is one question. Another is, whether the exigency of the present case be such, as should induce us, for the sake of avoiding probable dangers, to venture upon a great violation of constitutional principle? A third question is, whether the measure now before your lordships, will answer the purpose for which it is intended—that of pacification? I am not about to dwell at any length upon these three points, the last of which seems to me, just now, to be the most important.

If there be one fact, my lords, which the evidence put lately into your lordships' hands more clearly establishes than another, it is this; that up to a very recent date, the disturbances in Ireland have had nothing to do with Roman Catholic disabilities. The calamities of that unhappy country have a far different origin. She labours under the malignant influence of a more deeply-seated, a more inveterate, but, I trust in God, not an incurable disease. It was stated in evidence, by a distinguished member of another House, that the proximate cause of disturbance in Ireland, is the extreme misery of the peasantry: the remote is to be found

in what he justly designated a radically vicious state of society—a state, which, if your lordships will condescend to hear the opinion of one so inexperienced in political questions, I should say, requires the most prompt and vigorous measures of statistic legislation. It is, indeed, such a state of society as exists in no other Christian country; where the chief proprietors of the soil are absent, and their places supplied by persons of inferior education, and, what is worse, of immoral habits; a system of tenancy engrafted upon tenancy, which, by an almost inconceivable climax of extortion, wrings at length from the miserable cultivator of the soil, more than the soil itself produces; where whole provinces obstinately adhere to absurd and obsolete usages, in direct opposition to the common and statute law of the realm.

Such a state of society as this, my lords, is to be corrected, not by such measures as that which is now before the House, but by other measures of a more comprehensive and efficacious kind; by the adoption of a more equitable system of tenure; by a purer administration of justice in its inferior departments; by an alteration in the revenue laws; by the establishment of manufactures and the extension of commerce; by the introduction of an effective system of education; and last, but not least, because it would lead the way to all the rest, by the return of the proprietors of the soil.

Relief from the evils of such a system, my lords, is the emancipation of which Ireland stands in need: this is the emancipation which would raise her from her degraded state, by rescuing her sons, first from sloth and reckless poverty, and then from ignorance, superstition, and insubordination. When this comprehensive act of justice shall have been done; when these effectual remedies have been applied, and their effects perceived in the civil and moral improvement of her population, then, my lords, it will be time enough to talk of further concessions of political power.

It appears, my lords, that until the year 1823, the great body of the Roman Catholics cared but little about what is called emancipation; and even now, their notion of it is, according to one witness, the restoration of their church to its

ancient supremacy; according to another, the recovery of the forfeited estates. Whichever of these expectations they may entertain, and I think it probable that they entertain them both, it becomes the House to consider, whether, if this bill be passed into a law, it will satisfy the great mass of the Roman Catholic peasantry, when they find that it confers upon them neither of those boons; although in effect it carries one of them in its train? To what lengths their feelings of disappointment may drive them, if the measures should not be carried, I pretend not to foresee. I confess I am not altogether free from apprehension. But be those feelings what they may, this I will venture to assert, that they owe their existence to the artifices of a few political agitators—I use the term, my lords, advisedly and deliberately, for one of the most conspicuous of their leaders, not long ago, thanked his God that he was an agitator—a knot of men, who have thrown this leaven into the mass, predisposed from other causes to ferment, in order that while the vast body heaves and swells under the process, they may themselves be lifted to the surface.

This view of the subject, my lords, is amply justified by the evidence before your lordships' committee. It was not till the Catholic Association commenced its operations, that the great body of the Roman Catholics in Ireland began to think much of emancipation, as it is called; a question, which, as it directly affected only a few, was not likely to trouble the repose of the many; who, if they had been permitted to enjoy in any fair proportion, the produce of their honest labour, would have cared but little for the exclusion of a few of their richer brethren from Parliament. That it has not hitherto been to them a cause of discontent, is proved by the fact, that their propensity to outrage and lawless violence has not diminished in proportion to the successive relaxations of the penal code. In fact, they hardly know that such relaxation has taken place; a plain, an undeniable proof that former concessions, far exceeding in number and importance those which remain to be made, have had no effect whatever on their conduct or their comfort.

It is also a proof, my lords, that those persons on whom the Roman Catholic peasantry depend for information and instruction, have thought fit to withhold from them that knowledge, which, if imparted, would have been a persuasive to loyalty and contentedness, and a sedative, at least to feelings of insubordination. The motives of that class of persons, who have kept the people in ignorance of those benefits, which were represented to be of vital importance to them, I pretend not to assign. But this I will say, that it is precisely the line of conduct which would have been pursued by those, who, having a far greater and more perilous object of enterprize in view, would treat as insignificant and trivial, all the preliminary points of conquest. It is consistent with the policy of skilful engineers, who regard the successive removal of barriers and outworks only as opening the way for an assault upon the citadel. Such would be the policy of these, who value even the admission of their lay brethren into Parliament, only as facilitating the accomplishment of their grand scheme, the establishment of the Roman Catholic upon the ruins of the Protestant Church ;

“ Actum, inquit, nihil est, nisi Pœno milite portas
Frangimus, et media vexillum pono suburra.”

Most truly, my lords, was it observed of Popery, in the remonstrance of the Commons to King James the First, “ It hath a restless spirit, and will strive by these gradations. If it once get but a connivance, it will press for a toleration; if that be obtained, they must have an equality; from thence they will aspire to a superiority, and will never rest till they have got a subversion of the true religion.” That this, my lords, is the object which the Roman Catholic hierarchy and Priesthood of Ireland have in view, is, to my mind, as clear as the sun at noon-day. Nothing short of this will satisfy them; although I hope we may live to see the time, when, under the divine blessing, wiser and more effectual measures of relief shall render the lower orders in that country an educated, an industrious, a contented people, and shall wrest

a formidable engine of disturbance from the hands of those who now wield it at their will.

Depend upon it, my lords, if the Roman Catholic population of Ireland suffer religious feelings to mix themselves with the causes of disturbance, they are feelings which extend themselves far beyond the narrow limits of the present bill, which, therefore, we cannot reasonably regard as a measure of pacification. And surely it is somewhat suspicious, when we are told by some of its warmest advocates, by those who are best acquainted with the feelings and habits of the people, that we must not expect complete pacification in less than twenty years, and even then, only from the combined operation of this measure with others of a very different kind. A very competent witness, Mr. M'Carthy, has said, that if employment were provided for the peasantry, and other measures devised for their benefit, Ireland might be quiet, without these concessions; but he fears they would still be made a handle of. A handle, my lords? Is there a noble lord who hears me, who does not think, that if the bill before us is passed, there will not be abundance of such handles; in the remaining points of exclusion, in the political inferiority of the Roman Catholic Church, and in the materials which it will supply for electioneering intrigues and cabals?

I maintain, therefore, my lords, that in applying this remedial measure as an anodyne to the spasms by which Ireland is convulsed, your lordships will commit a great practical error in the diagnosis of her complaint. You will administer a remedy for one disease, while all the symptoms indicate the presence of another. Persuaded, as I am, of the ultimate objects of the Roman Catholic Priesthood (and I impute to them no blame, as sincere Roman Catholics, for entertaining such views), believing that they aim at the subversion of the Protestant Church, and the erection of their own upon its ruins—can you blame me, my lords, as a minister and guardian of that Protestant Church, if I give my decided opposition to a measure which will give them unspeakable facilities in the attainment of that object? We all know, my lords, what novel and dangerous notions are afloat re-

specting Church property. I need hardly remind you of that iniquitous resolution of the Irish House of Commons relative to the tithe of agistment, which passed into a law at the Union. And have we no reason to apprehend still more daring attempts upon the property of the Church, when twenty or thirty Roman Catholic members shall have found their way into the other House, pledged to support every measure against the tithe system, and sure of being cashiered by the Priests at the next election, if they be lukewarm and inactive in the cause. I confess, my lords, I cannot contemplate without alarm, the probable influence of such a compact body of voters, moving perhaps in the train of one of those portentous comets, which,—

“ From their horrid hair,
Shake pestilence and war”

against all that protects the religious establishments of the country.

Such, my lords, are the opinions which I have been led to form, by a careful perusal of the evidence on the state of Ireland. We have been repeatedly told—my reverend brethren and myself—not to look at this question in a merely religious point of view, but to regard it as a great political measure. I have, therefore, thought it my duty to enter somewhat at large into its probable results. In so doing, I am not insensible of my presumption, in offering advice to your lordships, whose experience in these questions so greatly surpasses my own; and in taking upon myself a character of which it has always been my endeavour to steer clear—that of a politician. My opinion, such as it is, is sincere; and I am open to conviction, if it can be proved to be false.

I come now, my lords, to that question on which I may be considered more competent to form an opinion; I mean the doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church. But, before I touch upon dogmas of a more speculative kind, let me call your lordships' attention to a point which affects us more nearly and directly; I mean the sentiments and feelings entertained by the Roman Catholic body towards the Protest-

ant Church. One distinguished witness, a member of that communion, declared, that were he not convinced that the present measure would tend to strengthen the Protestant interest, he would not support it; of course this expression is to be taken with that latitude of meaning which, I believe, is usually allowed to speakers from the other side of St. George's Channel; but certainly it savours of the indiscreet warmth of a witness, who, in his anxiety to serve the cause in hand, proves rather too much. However, I have no right to question the sincerity of that very able and distinguished person, as far as his own feelings are concerned. But if you consider him to be the representative, in that respect, of the Roman Catholic body, no idea can be more fallacious. That such are not the sentiments of that body, appears from the general tenor of the evidence before your lordships.

And now, my lords, with regard to that evidence, I must take the liberty of making one remark. As far as facts are concerned, and the opinion of the individual witnesses, I am disposed to receive their testimony without hesitation or doubt. But as to the views and wishes of the Roman Catholics of Ireland, I hope your lordships did not expect, through the medium of your committee (for no tribunal so constituted could reasonably expect), to arrive at the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. That is a result, my lords, which depends quite as much upon those who question, as upon those who answer; a position most remarkably exemplified in the evidence before us, as I could easily show, were time and space allowed me.

What I say, my lords, is, that as to the wishes and hopes of the Roman Catholics, you cannot form a correct estimate of them from the cautious and guarded sentiments of a few able men, whose answers would go no further than the questions put to them; who stood before you, armed at all points upon the objects of your inquiry, and declaring, not the views and purposes of the whole Roman Catholic body, for they had no authority so to do, but their own individual opinion of what those views and purposes ought to be. No, my lords, if you would learn the sentiments and hopes which

pervade the great mass of the Roman Catholic population, attend their public meetings; hear their favourite orators, not unskilled in human nature, select those topics which are most congenial with the feelings of their audience; hear them denounce the Protestant Church as an intolerable nuisance, a baneful pest, an incubus upon the prosperity of the country! Listen to the applause with which these declarations are received, and then judge of the views which the Roman Catholics entertain.

My lords, in a very remarkable speech of Dr. Dromgoole, which was received by a crowded assembly with acclamations of applause, and which was afterwards declared by a Priest of his communion to be "Catholic, purely, precisely Catholic," he thus speaks of the Protestant Church:—"It shall fall, and nothing but the memory of the mischief it has created shall survive. It has had its time upon earth; and, when the time arrives, shall Catholics be bound by an oath to uphold a system, which they believe will one day be rejected by the whole earth?" So spoke the Popish layman. Now hear the Priest, (Mr. Gandolphy), and they are his words taken from a book, which, although it was rejected by the moderation or the policy of the Vicar Apostolic of his district, was carried to the foot of the Papal throne, received the sanction of the highest authority, and was declared "worthy of being cased in cedar and gold, and highly advantageous to the Catholic Church." He says of the English Church, that "she is the eldest of her heretical sisterhood—a rebellious child—with a hateful eye he views the sickly sprouts which issue from its broken branches—they shall gather it up and cast it into the fire, and it shall burn."

"— teda lucebit in illa

Qua stantes, ardent, qui fixo gutture fumant."

Such, my lords, are the sentiments at this day avowed by some, and applauded by many more, of that great body to whom we are required to make further concessions of political power.

As to the property of our Church, my lords, I once thought

that the Roman Catholic Priesthood cast a longing eye on the tithes. On that point I have been undeceived. They now tell us that they have no desire whatever to appropriate the tithes to themselves; they only intend to take them away from the Protestant Church. Surely, my lords, there cannot be a more effectual method of destroying an adversary, than to deprive him of the means of subsistence. And that this is the full purpose and intention of the Roman Catholics, I prove by the most authentic testimony. I prove it, my lords, by their own petition, presented to the House of Commons on the 31st of May, 1824. In that petition, and it is a document well worthy your lordships' most serious attention, they plainly insinuate that, in order to satisfy them, three things are absolutely necessary. And what are these three things? First, the repeal of the Union; second, the abolition of tithes; and third, the annulling of all corporate privileges.

Upon this remarkable petition, my lords, I will not dwell at length, but request your lordships' attention to a not less important testimony. In one of the letters published under the signature of J. K. L., and generally attributed to Dr. Doyle, a very different person from the Dr. Doyle who appeared before your lordships' committee—it is said that “the Catholics, as Catholics, have no designs hostile to the Church; but, as a body of men chiefly employed in agricultural pursuits, they object not to the Church, but to the Establishment.” My lords, I think that a pretty convincing mark of hostility to the Church, would be to take away the immunities and property which it enjoys as an establishment. The distinction which is taken by Dr. Doyle is about as valid, as if a disappointed suitor in the Court of Chancery were to approach the noble and learned lord on the woolsack, (I beg that noble lord's pardon, but I am sure he will not be offended at my introducing his name to illustrate my argument)—and were to say to him, “My lord, I beg to assure you, that I, as A. B., entertain no personal animosity towards your lordship, as Earl of Eldon, but as a disappointed suitor in your court, I must beg leave to administer to you, as Lord

High Chancellor, a knock on the head." Exactly such, my lords, is the miserable sophistry of Dr. Doyle. He is kindly disposed towards the Church, as a Church, but as an Establishment he would starve her to death.

This same Dr. Doyle (I beg his pardon, this same J.K.L.) declares that the Protestant Clergy are, and will be detested; he asserts, that all the efforts of legislators to improve and enrich Ireland have been marred by the Protestant Clergy; and that the murders and atrocities which stain the character of the nation, harden its heart, and brutalize its feeling, have been occasioned or committed by the agents of the Protestant Clergy—that Clergy, my lords, to whose zeal and usefulness, and in most cases to their forbearance, your witnesses have borne their almost concurrent testimony: that clergy, who, in the great moral destitution and desolation of Ireland, remained as oases in the desert; the only class of resident gentry, to whom the peasantry looked up with respect and gratitude; whose houses, in the midst of nocturnal plunder and conflagration, remained unprotected and uninjured.

My Lords.—I trust that I am not moved to anger by these calumnious imputations upon my brethren, I hope, at least, I shall not be thought to say a word by way of retaliation; I would not speak with harshness of one who is placed in the same spiritual order with myself; but, there are emergencies, my lords, when justice requires the truth to be plainly spoken; and the present is one of them. It is my duty to call upon your lordships seriously to consider, what degree of weight, as to matters of opinion, ought to be attached to the testimony of a man, who, from the covert of his half-concealment, hurls firebrands into the sanctuary of the Protestant faith, and darts his poisoned arrows abroad; who engrafts upon the intolerant bigotry of the Romish Church the leveling principles of jacobinism, and then comes before your lordships to soften down, with glozing words, the asperities of his recorded calumny; and hints his disavowal, and hesitates his dislike, of doctrines which stand emblazoned in every official document of the church to which he belongs.

I now pass, my lords, by a natural transition, from Dr. Doyle to the Pope. It is easy to show that the distinction which is attempted to be drawn between the Papal supremacy in things spiritual and things temporal, is a distinction which exists only in theory. Before it can be admitted as practical, the religionists of the Romish Church must provide themselves with two distinct sets of principles and feelings, the one relating purely and solely to the things of this world, and the other to things eternal. I had intended to quote the sentiments of their own divines on the question, but the subject has been so ably discussed by my right reverend friend, the bishop of Llandaff, that it is needless for me to dwell upon it.

The Pope's supremacy is at least ecclesiastical, and an ecclesiastical supremacy necessarily involves some temporal jurisdiction. In point of fact, does not the Pope appoint all the titular bishops of Ireland, with incomes of from five hundred to two thousand pounds a-year? And have not these bishops the nomination of all the parish priests, the minimum of whose total income is already 150,000*l.*? Is this no interference in temporals? Is it nothing, my lords, that a foreign potentate, the mortal foe of your Church, should have in the very precincts of that Church a well-disciplined army of 3,000 men, sworn to pay implicit obedience to his commands; whose generals he appoints, and, be it remembered, has appointed, if not the creatures and partizans, yet the nominees of a Popish Pretender to the throne? It is said, indeed, that a titular bishop appointed by the Pope, at the recommendation of the Pretender, might have retained unimpaired his allegiance to the Protestant monarch on the throne. It is possible, no doubt. But what do your lordships imagine would have been his conduct, had the Pretender appeared at any time with an imposing force on the shores of Ireland? He would have been perplexed; but he would probably have been relieved from his perplexity by the exercise of what is called the *Altum Dominium*; that *ratio ultima paparum*, the specific reserved for emergencies of conscience. He would

have been released from his oath of allegiance, as the subjects of the Bourbons, by a bull of Pius VII., were released from theirs.

I come now, my lords, to the deposing power of the Pope, which Dr. Doyle tells us is obsolete; a well-chosen word; not abrogated; not annulled; not disavowed; but obsolete. Not to mention a long list of instances which occurred before the seventeenth century, I would remind your lordships that Pope Urban VIII. pretended to depose Charles I. in Ireland in 1643.; that Benedict XIII. issued a deposing bull against George II., in 1729, and that Pius VII. deposed Louis XVIII. and absolved all Frenchmen from their oaths of allegiance, when he crowned his dear son Napoleon. I acknowledge, my lords, that these were empty displays of authority. But although they were empty displays as far as regards the actual power of the Pope, they were not without their effect upon the minds of faithful Roman Catholics, as we should have found to our cost, had circumstances favoured their operation. But Dr. Doyle says, this doctrine is obsolete; that is, out of use. Why, my lords, in 1805, Pope Pius VII. instructs his nuncio at Vienna, that the church had decreed, as a punishment of heresy, the confiscation of heretical property, but unfortunately she cannot now exercise her right of deposing heretics from their principalities.

This, then, my lords, is the obsolete power of deposing princes—obsolete, as the strength of a tiger is obsolete, when his claws are pared and his limbs manacled. These offensive tenets are still embraced by the Romish Church: individuals there may be, and doubtless are, who either disavow them, or retain them in a qualified and mitigated sense; but they are still the doctrines of their church; and it is not competent to any one or more of its members to disclaim them, in the name and on the behalf of the church. Dr. Doyle knows, that he has no authority to do so; for he himself has told us, that the decisions of even Roman Catholic universities on such matters are not conclusive. Neither Dr. Doyle, nor any Roman Catholic university in Christendom, will dare to say, that a single canon of the Council of Trent is to be

rejected or contemned ; and I maintain, that a church, whose professions of faith and rule of discipline are to be found in the acts of that council, is unfit to be admitted to any considerable share of power or authority in a Protestant State.

In imputing to that church the doctrines which she solemnly professes to maintain, I hope, my lords, I shall not be considered as casting any blame upon the individuals of her communion. If they are consistent in their religious creed,—if they are true Roman Catholics,—they must believe whatever their church has declared necessary to be believed. My lords, I had prepared myself to enter more at length into this part of the subject, and to show by documentary evidence, that not one of these offensive doctrines has in point of fact been relinquished by the Romish church. But having already trespassed on your lordships' attention much longer than I had intended, I shall draw my observations to a close.

At the same time, my lords, I think it right to state that some of these doctrines are asserted and insinuated both in the class-book at Maynooth, and in the elementary books of religious instruction, which are in common use in Ireland. To mention only one; the sanctity of an oath. It is perfectly notorious, that the Irish peasantry in general pay no regard at all to this most sacred of all obligations. They are taught in Dr. James Butler's Roman Catholic Catechism, a work in very general use, that an unjust oath is not binding: and to the question, what is an unjust oath? the answer is, that which is injurious to God, our neighbour, or ourselves. As to the first part of the definition, we know what interpretation may be put upon it by the Romish Church; as to the last it is very inconsistent with the description given in a book of unquestionable authority, where it is said of the righteous man, that "he sweareth to his neighbour and disappointeth him not, though it were to his own hinderance."

These are some of the arguments, my lords, which I have to urge against the adoption of the present measure. There are others, with which, at this hour of the night, I must forbear to trouble your lordships. Upon the whole, I contend that the bill now before us is not an effectual measure

of pacification: on the contrary, I regard it, as containing within itself the materials of dissension and civil commotion. That it is an inroad upon the Constitution as by law established, and a violation of the principles of that Constltution, is not to be denied. It proposes to admit a powerful and active body of foes into the very citadel of our Protestant faith. It is but a stepping-stone to those, who are bent upon scaling the walls of our Establishment, and depriving us of our immunities and rights.

Once more, my lords, I beg leave to declare, that I impute no blame to the Roman Catholics for desiring that consummation; and I think it is but an act of justice to say, that as far as my personal acquaintance has extended among the higher orders of Roman Catholics in this country, I have seen nothing which led me to believe, that they were under the influence of the more obnoxious doctrines of their church. The few whom I have known, I have had reason to value and esteem. One gentleman in my own diocese, possessing large landed property, has, in a spirit of liberality (may I be permitted, without offence, to say) worthy of a purer faith, supported nearly at his own expense, a national school.

I must also, my lords, freely admit, that I may be mistaken, as to the consequences which in my conscience I believe this bill, if passed into a law, will produce. We live in an age, which has taught us by experience not to speculate too confidently upon the results of any great political measure. And I have, besides, a firm confidence in the continuance of that providential care, which has hitherto wonderfully protected the Church of these realms, and which, while she continues to answer the great ends of her existence, will not, I am persuaded, be withdrawn from her. But it is our part and duty, my lords, to act according to the dictates of human wisdom; and I cannot consent, for the sake of avoiding a possible and contingent danger, to make a great inroad upon the Constitution, nor sacrifice our certain securities for the uncertain chance of conciliation; injuring ourselves without conferring an adequate benefit upon others.

These, my lords, are some of the reasons which will induce me to give my vote in the negative this evening; not, certainly, a satisfactory but a conscientious vote—and I wish they may be such, as to turn your lordships' serious attention to the nature of those dangers, with which the Protestant interest is threatened by the present bill.

Majority against the Bill 48.

SPEECH
OF THE
RIGHT REV. LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY.

On the Motion “for a second reading of the Bill for giving the Elective Franchise to the English Roman Catholics,” in the House of Lords, July 9th, 1823, the Right Reverend THOMAS BURGESS, D.D. LORD BISHOP OF SALISBURY, addressed their Lordships in the following constitutional diction.

MY LORDS.—On the subject of the bills, now before the House, it is my misfortune to differ so widely from my right reverend brother (the Bishop of Norwich) who spoke last, and I am so far from thinking it illiberal and uncharitable to oppose any further encroachments of the Church of Rome upon the Church of England, or to think and speak of that foreign church in the language of our own Church articles and homilies, that I cannot suppress my reasons for the vote that I shall give this night against admitting Roman Catholics to offices of trust and profit, and to the elective franchise.

The oath and declaration, my lords, which it is the object of these bills to repeal, were intended to exclude Roman Catholics from offices of trust and profit, because the principles of their church were held to be inconsistent with the safety and tranquillity of the State. My lords, those principles are precisely the same now, as they were at the enactment of the oath and declaration; it is the boast of that church that they are so. Persons, therefore, professing

those principles, are as inadmissible to offices of trust and profit now, as they were formerly. They are inadmissible to those offices, because they are incapable of the allegiance which is due from subjects to their sovereign. My lords, they are incapable of that allegiance, because they are bound by a contrary allegiance to a foreign sovereign.

My Lords.—The oath which one of these bills proposes, as a security for a Roman Catholic's allegiance, is perfectly nugatory, because it is superseded and nullified by the solemn declaration* of true obedience to the Pope, which he has already made, or which is implied in his submission to the Pope's supremacy—that supremacy, which they hold to be superior to the sovereignty of the realm. My lords, the Romish clergy, (says Blackstone in his Chapter of Treasons,) “when they take orders, renounce their allegiance to their temporal sovereign, that being inconsistent with their engagement of canonical obedience to the Pope.” By those engagements they are bound to oppose, to execrate, and, as far as in them lies, to extirpate every thing heretical, that is, every thing contrary to the religion of the Church of Rome.

This principle of extirpation, my lords, is not a dormant and obsolete principle. It is at this moment in Ireland, in full and active operation. We have been told very lately, on the best authority, that the leaders of the sanguinary bands which infest that country, declare boldly and candidly, that their object is to drive the heretics out of the country, and to take their property!

The most effectual way to tranquillize Ireland, my lords, is not to encourage Popery, but to strengthen the hands, and to increase the influence of Protestantism, and at the same time to afford that protection to converted Priests, which was granted to them formerly; which is absolutely necessary to the exercise of their will, and without which they are in danger of assassination in one country, or of destitution in

* The declaration made by the Romish clergy at the time of taking orders, is administered in the form of an oath, at institution to a benefice, and again at consecration to a bishopric.

the other. It is indeed to be hoped that another session of Parliament will not be suffered to pass without reviving that humane and beneficial act, which expired on the 24th of June, 1800, by which a provision was made for the sustenance of destitute clergymen, who had renounced the errors of the Church of Rome, and were conformed to the Church of England.

I object then, my lords, to the admission of Roman Catholics to offices of trust and profit, because the principles of their church are contrary to the allegiance which is due from subjects to their Sovereign, and inconsistent with the tranquillity of the State. The grant of the elective franchise would be attended with still greater inconsistencies and mischiefs.

I need not remind your lordships that Parliament is convened by the writ of summons expressly for the defence of the kingdom and the Church: not of the kingdom only, but of the kingdom and the Church. A representative of a Roman Catholic district, if true to his constituents, must, instead of defending the Church of England, be the advocate of measures most adverse to the King's prerogative, and most hostile to the Protestant religion.

The elective franchise, my lords, has been very injurious to the peace of Ireland, and productive of many ill consequences, especially by the subdivision of property which it has led to. It could not, indeed, do so much mischief at present in England, on account of the comparative paucity of Roman Catholics here. But the grant of this important privilege would add greatly to their numbers, activity, and influence. And, why should we, in defiance of the Constitution, and of experience, put the tranquillity of England to such a hazard, and expose it, in any degree, to the degrading and demoralizing consequences, which have resulted from this fatal boon in Ireland?*

* In the year 1792, the Roman Catholics of Ireland petitioned the Irish Parliament for the elective franchise, proposing twenty pounds per annum as the qualification. The petition was then refused. In the following

My Lords.—For these several reasons, I shall give my vote against both the bills now before the House.

year, the petition was granted; and no higher qualification required than forty shillings per annum; a most improvident and pernicious grant, depressing the Protestant interest without conciliating the Roman Catholics, and, by the minute subdivision of property, productive of political disorder, and ruinous to agricultural improvement.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT REV. LORD BISHOP OF PETERBOROUGH.

When the Roman Catholic Claims were introduced by the Earl of Donoughmore, in the House of Lords, May 16th, 1817, the Right Reverend HERBERT MARSH, D.D. LORD BISHOP of PETERBOROUGH, addressed the House, in the following argumentative, perspicuous, and truly Protestant language.

MY LORDS.—Though hitherto unaccustomed to speak before so august an assembly, and conscious of my inability to do justice to so momentous a subject, I yet presume to solicit your indulgence at this early stage of the debate. But, as the same subject has been repeatedly examined in this House, I will not attempt to follow the noble mover through all the various matter, which he has introduced, but will state briefly and generally the reasons which induce me to dissent from an opinion so respectably maintained.

My lords, if the question now before us were a question of *religious liberty*, I should rejoice to co-operate with the noble earl for the attainment of so desirable an end. But the religious restraints, under which the petitioners once laboured are already removed. And we must no longer speak of *pains* and *penalties* as attaching to the religion which they profess, when they are empowered by the law of the land, to exercise their religious worship, and to maintain

their religious opinions, with the same freedom, as the members of the Established Church. We are not, therefore, concerned with the question, whether we shall extend their religious liberty; for of that liberty they are already in complete possession. We are concerned with the question whether we shall extend their *political power*. And surely, my lords, we may venture to oppose an extension of political power without incurring, either the charge of intolerance, or the charge of inhumanity.

But, if we are now concerned with a *political* question, why (it may be asked) should religious topics be introduced into it at all? Of what importance can it be, in the discussion of a *political* subject, to inquire, whether the decrees of the Council of Trent agree, or disagree, with the Thirty-nine articles—whether the doctrine of transubstantiation be true, or false;—whether the invocation of saints be efficacious or not. Let the errors of the Church of Rome be acknowledged; let it be granted also, that its discipline is such as no Protestant can approve; and let the Pope himself be condemned, as he justly deserves, for still refusing to the laity the free use of the Bible. But however erroneous may be its doctrine, or however faulty may be its discipline, yet if the tenets of that church do not prevent its members from being good subjects of the State, why should they be excluded from offices in the State? Such exclusion may be justified on the ground of *civil* delinquency. But if no such delinquency can be laid to their charge, if with all the errors of their church, they are able and willing to serve the State, why are they inadmissible to employment in the State? In short, let the question of admission to civil employment be referred to its proper standard—*civil capacity* and *civil worth*.

I have now stated, my lords, in terms the most forcible which I could devise, the argument which in itself is the most powerful, that was ever advanced in favour of the present question. And if the argument, so stated, admits a satisfactory answer, I trust your lordships will deem it unnecessary to go into the proposed committee. I am ready then

to meet the question on the ground most favourable to the petitioners: I am ready to assume as a fundamental proposition, that admission to *civil* employment should be determined by *civil capacity* and *civil worth*.

But, my lords, before we attempt to judge by the standard here proposed, we must make ourselves acquainted with that standard. We must examine all the various qualities, which constitute civil capacity and civil worth. For among those various qualities, there may be some, which in themselves are not of a civil nature; there may be some even of a religious nature. But, if the religion professed by one man, renders him a more useful member of the State, than the religion professed by another, surely the one is better qualified than the other, to conduct the business of the State. And though the State ought not to punish men for religious opinions, unless those opinions are injurious to the State itself, it has an undoubted right to trust the management of its own affairs, exclusively to those, in whom it has reason to confide. It is still their civil capacity, their civil worth which determines the choice of the State, whatever be the ingredient, which enters into the composition of *civil capacity* and *civil worth*.

Let us now apply our standard, my lords, to the respective cases, of Churchmen, of Protestant Dissenters, and of members of the Church of Rome. The allegiance of the Churchman is ENTIRE: he acknowledges the King as supreme in matters ecclesiastical, as well as civil. The Protestant Dissenter acknowledges only his *civil* supremacy, which is acknowledged also by the members of the Church of Rome. So far, therefore, the two latter stand on a footing of equality. But if the civil allegiance of Protestant Dissenters receives not, like that of the Churchman an accession of strength from ecclesiastical allegiance, it is not exposed to such a drawback, as operates with the members of the Church of Rome. If a Protestant Dissenter acknowledges, either an individual, or any body of men, as forming the spiritual head of his own party, such person or persons are still the subjects of his sovereign. But if a church is governed by a foreigner,

who has neither dependence on nor a common interest with, the King of the country, the *civil* allegiance of those, who belong to that church cannot fail to be weakened by their *ecclesiastical* allegiance.

Yet, my lords, notwithstanding this anomaly of government, notwithstanding this confusion of foreign with domestic allegiance, we are told, there is no reason to apprehend, that the one should interfere with the other. We are told, that the provinces of spiritual and of temporal obedience, are quite distinct; and therefore, that obedience to the Pope in things *spiritual* can never detract from obedience to the King in things temporal. But, where religion and politics are so blended, as in this country, it is often difficult to determine whether the subject of dispute shall be regarded as a *civil*, or regarded as a *religious* question. The very case, which is now before us, is a case in point. Some view it in a civil light, others in a religious light. And, if the question is civil in itself, it is still so connected with religion, that it cannot be duly appreciated, without taking religion into the account. It is unavoidable, therefore, that doubts should arise; whether a subject of dispute shall be considered as a *spiritual*, or considered as a temporal concern. And, to whom, my lords, will the members of the Church of Rome apply in such cases for a solution of their doubts? Why, they will apply to the self-same spiritual power, which is at issue with the temporal.

Under such circumstances, my lords, allegiance to the Pope *must* interfere with allegiance to the King. And when it does interfere, when the soul is threatened on the one side, the body only on the other, men will yield to that authority, of which they are the most afraid. The power, which commands the conscience, will command the conduct of the man. And this power, which is a *foreign* power, the power of a foreign prince, is so easily directed by foreign intrigue to purposes subservient of our Constitution, that they who submit to such a power, are hardly qualified to undertake the guidance of our Constitution.

I am aware, my lords, that arguments tending to exclusion,

are, in the present age, condemned as narrow and illiberal. What is called an *enlightened* policy is represented as the *best* policy; and whatever fears may be entertained in theory, the experience derived from the late example of France is supposed to have already shown, that Roman Catholics and Protestants may be admitted alike into the councils of the state, without danger to the state. But, my lords, there is a material difference between the admission of a Protestant into the councils of a nation, where the established religion is that of the Church of Rome, and the admission of a Roman Catholic into the councils of a nation, where the established religion is that of the Church of England. When a Protestant is admitted into the councils of France, the drawback of foreign allegiance does not exist. The Protestant so admitted acknowledges no other supremacy than that of his lawful sovereign; he owes no other allegiance than allegiance to *that* king into whose councils he is called. Not so with the Roman Catholic when admitted into the councils of a Protestant prince; *he* owes allegiance to a *foreign* sovereign, to a sovereign who wields the powerful sceptre of religion, but whose religion is adverse; whose views, therefore, must be hostile to the interests of the *domestic* sovereign.

Let us now revert, my lords, to the standard by which it was proposed to try the merits of the present question; namely, that of *civil capacity* and *civil worth*. If they, whose allegiance is thus divided and distracted, can possess the same civil capacity, the same civil worth, as they whose whole allegiance is given to their lawful sovereign, why then, my lords, let them be admitted alike to the confidence of their sovereign; let them be admitted alike to the councils of the nation; let them be admitted alike to offices of trust and power; and let us grant at once, that the Constitution may be as safely administered by the former as administered by the latter. But, my lords, if it is *impossible* that the same *civil capacity*, the same *civil worth*, which attaches to those whose allegiance is single and entire, should attach also to those whose allegiance is thus divided and distracted, it follows of necessity, that they are *not* alike admissible to the

confidence of their sovereign; that they are *not* alike admissible to the council of the nation; that they are *not* alike admissible to offices of trust and power; and therefore, my lords, that the claims which are now advanced, ought *not* to be allowed.

I do not mean to assert, my lords, that the members of the Church of Rome in this country are not good subjects—I speak only by *comparison*:—I assert only, that they are not *so* good and *so* useful subjects of the State as the members of the Establishment, or as they themselves would be if they would break the fetters which bind them to a foreign prince. I ascribe to them the highest respectability; I acknowledge their honour and their integrity: but that anomaly of government, a foreign jurisdiction in spiritual concerns, distracts their allegiance, and makes them obedient to the Pope, when they *ought* to be, and are probably *inclined* to be, obedient to their king.

After this general view of the subject, my lords, it can hardly be necessary to enter into single topics of minor moment; but so much stress has been laid on domestic nomination, that I cannot conclude without a few remarks on it. Domestic nomination is a term well calculated to diminish the impression made by the apprehension of *foreign* influence. If a bishop is nominated or elected, at home or in his own see, whether by a chapter, or by a committee of neighbouring bishops, or by any other domestic body, such nomination or election must undoubtedly be *ascribed* to that body. But, my lords, it is well known, especially on the bench where I have the honour to sit, that a chapter may elect a bishop, without having the choice of a bishop. Domestic nomination, therefore, does not of itself imply domestic choice; it does not of itself exclude the exercise of foreign influence; it cannot, therefore, afford the security required. But let us suppose that *no* foreign influence, either direct or indirect, operates *before* nomination, we shall have little reason to think ourselves secure when we reflect on the unbounded influence which follows *after* nomination. We shall have little reason to conclude that a Romish bishop is

entitled to the confidence of a *Protestant king*, when we read the oath of allegiance which at his consecration he takes to the *Pope*.

Let me intreat, then, your lordships to pause, before you determine to remove the guards which the wisdom of our ancestors have provided against foreign influence in the councils of this nation, and which, my lords, if once destroyed, the wisdom of succeeding generations will in vain attempt to restore.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD ORIELL.

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The Roman Catholic Petition having been presented by Mr. Fox, to the House of Commons, May 14th, 1805, the Right Honourable LORD ORIELL, (then MR. FOSTER,) late Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, and a resident Nobleman in Ireland, delivered the following splendid, eloquent, argumentative, and truly Protestant oration.

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SIR.—I feel myself bound, by the importance of the subject, as well as by the part I took in another place (Irish House of Commons) upon a former occasion, to claim the indulgence of the House for the few minutes during which I shall call upon its attention. From the manner in which the honourable member near me (Mr. Lee) has gone through the whole detail of the penal laws against Papists in Ireland, I fear the House may be led to imagine, that they are still in force; the fact is otherwise, and I will tell gentlemen the real situation of the Roman Catholics of Ireland at this day. They are as free as the Protestants, in the acquisition, in the enjoyment, and in the disposal of property of every species; they can purchase lands, settle their estates, and enjoy all the profits of commercial industry equally with him; they pos-

sess every benefit of civil liberty as fully as any other subjects.

What, then, Sir, is the object of their petition? Political power only:—this is all that remains for you to give, or for them to demand; and every gentleman who has supported the petition acknowledges it. I am glad to see the subject now brought to the true point. The grant of political power is the avowed object for us to discuss; of every thing else they are in complete possession. Political power is then the sole demand, and what are the inducements held out to us for granting it? The gentlemen tell you it will conciliate Ireland; that it will incorporate four-fifths of the people there, and one-fifth of all your population, at this perilous moment; that, by not granting this petition, you deprive yourselves of one-fifth of your national vigour, and of your physical strength. Such are the arguments of the honourable mover (Mr. Fox,) and of the other honourable gentleman (Mr. Grattan,) who spoke yesterday on the same side; and that four-fifths of the Irish nation are thus rendered of no use to the empire. But, Sir, how do their arguments support them? They forget, that, almost in the same breath, when they wish to prove the safety of the measure, they tell you and tell you truly, how much the empire is indebted to the Irish; that the Irish composed a great and illustrious part of that gallant army which conquered Egypt; that they supply a large proportion of the British fleet with sailors; and that to their courage and to their ardour, LORD NELSON was indebted for the glorious victory of the Nile. They tell you too, that half your armies in every war, half the militia, and a large portion of the Irish yeomanry, which overpowered the late rebellion, and saved Ireland to the empire, were Roman Catholics of Ireland. I agree with them in the whole, to the honour of my countrymen: and what follows?—that we have now, of their own showing, the full physical force, the full national vigour, which they inconsistently bid us acquire by this unnecessary measure: and I will add more, that if the armies want increase, if the navy requires additional hands, this measure will not add one argument to the

recruit; and Irishmen will come forward with the same ardour, and with the same alacrity, which have distinguished the character of their country for its love of military glory, whether you grant the petition or not.

But, Sir, if conciliation is to follow, we ought to know whom we are bid to conciliate: is it the lower and middling ranks of the Roman Catholic people? I will assert, in presence of many gentlemen from Ireland, who can contradict me if I am wrong, that the mass of that people there do not know what this claim means. Ask them what Roman Catholic Emancipation is, and so totally ignorant are they about it, that some say it is an exemption from tithes; others, it is to lower rents; others, that it will save taxes! In short, Sir, all who have heard of it (for many neither know nor care about it) will give you their own conjectures of whatever claim, debt, or demand, public or private, they wish to be freed from: scarce any believe it to be what it really is, a struggle for a few offices of political influence, or seats in Parliament, which the lower ranks cannot enjoy, and feel no interest in. These lower ranks do not, and cannot urge what they neither want nor comprehend. It is not, therefore, they who call for this measure.

And now, Sir, let us see how the argument stands as to the superior orders of the Roman Catholics. Do the gentlemen tell you the measure is necessary to secure their loyalty, or to procure their strength in this hour of peril? They pay them a bad compliment indeed if they represent this boon, or any boon, as necessary to make or keep them loyal—a compliment which I should be ashamed to offer, and which I cannot concur in with truth; for I know personally many of those gentlemen who have signed this petition, and I think I can answer for them, that they spurn such an idea. Those of them whom I have either the honour or pleasure of being able to speak of from personal acquaintance, are as loyal men, as good subjects, and have acted with as much zeal and energy to uphold the state against the invader, as any individuals in the kingdom. I will not, then, believe that the upper orders of the Roman Catholics qualify their at-

tachment to the empire by resting it on claims to be conceded, or stipulations to be bargained for: but if I could believe it, it would form with me an insurmountable bar to giving them that political power which is the acknowledged object of their petition, and it ought to decide us all unanimously and instantly to reject a demand so made. This argument of conciliation, therefore, so far as respects the loyalty or accession of the lower orders to the national strength, is confuted by the facts which the gentlemen who offer it have themselves urged; and the upper orders cannot admit it without acknowledging a qualified and temporizing loyalty only, which their conduct disavows.

But, Sir, to proceed with this favourite argument of conciliation, and it is almost the only one offered. If it is still urged that this measure will give content, and that the Roman Catholics will rest satisfied, you are totally mistaken. Let us judge of their future by looking at their past conduct. In 1778 the Irish Parliament removed some of the then existing restraints: content was to be the consequence; but they were not satisfied. In 1782 greater indulgence was granted; in 1792 they petitioned for further favours; and in 1793 much more was given to them than even they asked. I did not agree in that gift; I did not think that political wisdom justified our going so far: but a contrary opinion prevailed, and the measure was carried. I feared at the time that it would lead to new and further inadmissible demands, and that fear was too well founded, for two years did not elapse until, in 1795, they again came forward with the same object as they do now; and do you think that if you now acquiesce they will rest here? I am sorry to say the nature of man will not allow us to indulge such a hope, while his pursuit is power. No—they will not stop on this concession. We all know they look with jealousy to tithes being paid to the Protestant to uphold his Church. The interested feelings of their clergy, whose influence over the minds of their flocks is peculiarly powerful in the Roman Catholic worship, will urge them to continual exertion for the restoration of those tithes. Possessed of them they

would not rest; equality in religion would not satisfy: they would look to the weight of numbers, which their advocates so often dwell on, that the religion of the greater number ought to be the religion of the State. In short, they would look in the end to raise the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland on the ruins of the Protestant. Such will be the natural result of giving them political power; and they will hereafter laugh at our folly, if we make the concession.

Power is, Sir, and has been, so prevalent in their views, that they connect it in every attempt with every other object. Reform and Emancipation have gone together in the whole of their progress. These two watch-words of discontent were coupled together in all their proceedings, until the Union accomplished one of them; the reform, which otherwise they might have pursued for ages without effect. I know that I now tread on very delicate ground, but I trust to the liberality of the House, that if I use any unguarded expression, they will correct it, and allow me to explain.

Suppose then, Sir, for a moment, that they acquire a power of sitting in Parliament by the vote of this night; is it a strange conjecture that they would soon feel that their small number, if it were fifty or sixty, or even the whole hundred, would be of little avail among six hundred and fifty-eight; that the Union had accomplished the reform they wished for by the destruction of boroughs; and that two hundred seats, all belonging to Protestants, (for Protestants only received the compensation,) have been annihilated? Possessed then, Sir, of this reform, and of their power of sitting, it might be natural for them to look to a restoration of the Irish legislature. They would see the barriers, which the wisdom of ages had erected against their having political power, broken down by this night's decision: their exertions would rise in proportion to their hopes of success; and it would require only a revival of the Irish Parliament to give them the consequence and superiority they long for. The honourable mover's (Mr. Fox) doctrine, that seats in Parliament are their right, qualified by him, I acknowledge, with the exception of *salus populi suprema lex*,

would not weaken the endeavours of their prospects. They would consider it a right existing, but withheld from them, at the time the Union was discussed; and upon it they would endeavour at a dissolution of that measure. *They would call for three hundred members to resume their functions in an Irish Parliament; and the two hundred seats added in the room of the one hundred Protestant boroughs which we have demolished, would all be filled by popular elections, whose members, in which their strength consists, would decide.* What would not a majority so constituted look to? They would see their own aggrandizement, the maintenance and dignity of their clergy, and the consequent superiority of their church, all within their view. I will look no further, Sir, into so tremendous a prospect. This result may be slow, and I firmly believe the day of its accomplishment would be distant; but is it the less to be guarded against? To me the reasoning seems so strong, that I cannot shut my senses to it, nor to all the mischiefs which must attend the attempt, and the miseries which must follow it. *The seeds of separation would be sown, and Ireland might be torn from her connexion with Britain; without which she is, and must be, incapable of enjoying wealth, tranquillity, happiness, or any of the blessings of human life.*

But, Sir, when you talk of conciliating Ireland, you have forgotten to tell us where the discontent is. I know the country well, and I do not see it anywhere. If any gentleman has seen it, (and there are Irish representatives present from all parts,) I wish he would get up and state it. No—Ireland is content if you will not agitate her with ill-timed discussions; and I will venture to say that the rejection of this demand to-night will not cause a discontented thought, except in those very few whose ambition has been buoyed up by the vain and selfish hopes of power and personal influence.

Further, Sir, if by conciliation is meant the giving satisfaction, why look you to the Roman Catholics only, and forget that there are two millions of Protestants? Will they be satisfied by your breaking down the barriers which secure

their protection? *Remember that you have settled us in Ireland under the faith of that protection; that on that faith we claim as our inheritance all the blessings of that glorious Constitution which our ancestors and yours have fought and bled for—the Hanover Succession, THE ILLUSTRIOUS HOUSE OF BRUNSWICK on the throne, a Protestant King, with Protestant Counsellors, Protestant Lords, and Protestant Commons. This is what I call PROTESTANT ASCENDANCY in the true sense of the phrase, and while I can utter my voice in this House, I will ever demand it for my country.*

If then, Sir, by granting this petition you endanger, or even alarm, the Protestant, dissatisfaction, and not satisfaction, must be the result of the measure; and among whom? Among those who are, and ever have been, loyal to Church and State, and who swear allegiance to both; which those whom you are desired to admit as legislators decline. I might rest here, Sir, having shown you the futility of the only argument they dwell on, but I will go further; and when you are called on to give them political power, you are not to consider Ireland only; you must look to the situation of England, where the Roman Catholics do not enjoy the same privileges as their brethren in Ireland do. Are they less meritorious? Certainly not; and before you give further privileges to the Irish, you must put them on the same footing, and confer on those in Britain the right of voting for members, and all the other favours contained in the act of 1793. You must, in the next place, if you accede to this petition for the Irish, make the English Roman Catholics admissible also into the highest offices, and to a seat in Parliament: and then the Roman Catholics of England, Ireland, and Scotland may sit indiscriminately for every place throughout the whole empire, into which they can find access by any means they may think most likely to obtain for them the favourable opinion of the electors.

Will you not pause a little here, Sir, and reflect before you proceed? Reflect that you have a Protestant Church, and how it would tremble under such a change; that men who profess the Roman Catholic faith, and acknowledge a

foreign potentate to have spiritual authority within the realm, cannot be entrusted with framing laws for the Protestant Church, and the protection of the Protestant Establishment. On what foundation does that Church stand? Is it not on your laws? Do not its rites, its worship, its possessions, its hierarchy, its pre-eminence, all depend upon the laws of the realm? And are you ready to fill your legislative assemblies with Roman Catholics, with persons attached and bound to another church? Do you forget the necessary alliance between Church and State, that if you endanger the one you destroy the foundation of the other? And can you be so infatuated as to entertain for a moment the idea of calling on Roman Catholic members to make the laws on which both Church and State depend; and on Roman Catholic counselors to execute them? I will give the Roman Catholics every merit which men can claim, and still the feelings which are incident to human nature must debar them from being able to make such laws as those who profess the Established religion of this country are bound to do.

But, Sir, a curious argument has been urged by every gentleman on the opposite side who has spoken, that what the petitioners desire is little for us to give, and much for them to receive. I say the reverse is the true statement. They have little indeed to receive, compared with the much that we are called upon to give. They are to receive access to a few official situations in the State, and a power of sitting in Parliament. We are to give up that on which the vital liberties of our country rest, that which gives energy to our armies, and superiority to our navies; that which supports us whole and unimpaired amidst the crash of surrounding nations, and maintains us in the proud pre-eminence which so happily and honourably distinguishes the British name,—
THE GLORIOUS CONSTITUTION OF OUR COUNTRY. Little for us to give—do you say? Call you the surrender of the Bill of Rights little?—a demolition of our Church Establishment, little?—the Protestant Succession, little? What more have you to give, or what will remain to you worth preserving, when you have given it?

Sir, the honourable gentleman (Fox), tells you there is no danger in a state having its counsellors or ministers of a different religion, and he instances Sully and Neckar, in France; but they were Protestants, and they did not acknowledge the authority of a foreign power within the realm, which a Roman Catholic does; nor had they the larger portion in the community of their own persuasion, to support them in any innovations which their religious tenets might urge them to attempt. A Popish state may safely trust a Protestant at the helm, for he acknowledges its supremacy; but the Protestant nation cannot, with the same security, trust a Roman Catholic, who denies it. The same honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), has adduced Venice as an instance, where both religions equally managed the state. Surely he cannot be serious in offering us such a model. Does he quote her as an example? Venice, where is she now? No longer a nation, but sunk and lost to the world, after all her pride for centuries; and her fall, perhaps, accelerated by that very mixture of religious power which he recommends! (Some member smiling, Mr. Foster continued.)—I see the gentleman is not serious, but if he can laugh so carelessly when the happiness of a country is at stake, I would advise him to spend a few months in Ireland: he would then learn what the feelings of the honest and the loyal Protestant are, on seeing his rights made a matter of doubt; and he would probably abstain from sporting with his happiness and tranquillity, by such impolitic and unprovoked discussions.

I shall conclude, Sir, by reminding the House of an old maxim, *Principiis obsta*. It is a wise one, and bids you oppose this first attempt to break down the barriers which are drawn round the Constitution. A strong opinion has been firmly expressed by a great and decided number in another place (House of Lords) against this petition; and let us too, with equal manliness and wisdom, declare our determination this night, by such a clear and conclusive majority as shall put the matter to rest, and discourage all future attempts to disturb the public repose, and endanger the national security.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD VISCOUNT LORTON.



In the House of Lords, February 23d, 1827, the Right Honourable LORD VISCOUNT LORTON, a resident Nobleman in Ireland, addressed their Lordships in the following energetic and eloquent language, on presenting several petitions against the Roman Catholic Claims, from the Protestant inhabitants of the County of Sligo,—from the Bishops and Clergy of the dioceses of Killalla and of Clogher,—also from the Protestants, and the Presbyterian Inhabitants of a district in the County of Monaghan.

MY LORDS.—In rising to request permission to lay upon your lordships' table a petition from the Protestants of the county of Sligo, I shall beg leave to say a few words upon the subject matter it contains. In the first place, I must premise by observing, that it has the signatures of nearly, or entirely the whole body of the resident gentlemen, and in the strongest but most respectful language, prays that no further concessions may be granted to the Roman Catholics of Ireland.

With my countrymen, my lords, I most decidedly concur; but, at the same time, feel it necessary to stand forward as an advocate of emancipation, though not exactly for the description of persons who have been for so many years urging claims hostile to the Constitution, in no very qualified terms. No, my lords, those for whom I would claim this boon, are the Protestants of Ireland, who, I do not hesitate to affirm, are at this moment the most oppressed portion of the British subjects; in fact, they are a proscribed people; and if very strong measures are not adopted for their relief and security, all that are capable must leave the country, and we may expect to hear that the remainder have been annihilated in one way or another.

It may be unnecessary for me to inform your lordships, that a Roman Catholic Parliament has been permitted to sit in Dublin, from nearly the time of the passing of an act of this House to put down the late Roman Catholic Association, and that it is of a most dangerous nature, inasmuch as it combines the entire mass, from the highest to the lowest. At first, the higher orders seemed to keep aloof, but no sooner did the founders of this tremendous engine contrive to enlist under their banners the clergy, than all ranks, from the highest peer downwards, were put into requisition, and have exhibited as much zeal in the cause as the most furious demagogue in the land. Such is their infatuation, and such is the very extraordinary power and control that the Pope possesses over the hearts and understandings of those who belong to his Church.

Having said thus much of the Dublin convention, I must further bring to your lordships' observation, that the most bitter denunciations are constantly uttered at its meetings, against every thing that is Protestant, both as to the institutions of the country, as well as against individuals; who in the most cowardly manner, are held up to the detestation of the Romish peasantry, by the propagation of every species of malignant falsehood, and thus marked as fit subjects for assassination, whenever an opportunity may occur. The philippics of Messrs. O'Connell and Shiel are no doubt familiar to most of your lordships, but more particularly the base and dastardly observations of the latter person, when our late illustrious and lamented Commander-in-Chief was lying in his death-bed. It is difficult to think or speak with patience upon the subject. The speeches of these people have excited the country to such a degree, that the general opinion is—that a rebellion must take place. Should such a calamity befall the land, I trust, my lords, the strongest measures will at once be taken to prevent any of the leaders of the Association from leaving Ireland, for no doubt they will be the first to endeavour to make their escape from the mischief they have occasioned; but, my lords, they should be forced to fight it out, and not be permitted to leave their

poor deluded victims to the just vengeance of the government. Some of these bitter enemies to the British Protestant Constitution have, in the most exulting manner, pointed out, that the invasion of Ireland by a foreign foe would now be an easy matter, in consequence of the perfection that the navigation by steam has been brought to.

But here, my lords, they have shown their ignorance in nearly as strong a manner as their malignity; for never was there a discovery made that so completely secures Ireland from being taken by surprize by a hostile power—inasmuch as hundreds of thousands of gallant British soldiers could be landed, and set in motion against the enemy, in the course of from ten to twenty hours. And it should also be told these threatening boasters, that one British Company possesses more steam-vessels than all Europe besides.

These demagogues have been playing a game of brag at their convention, and, I lament to say, have as yet carried all before them; but, my lords, if they were met with vigour and decision, they would retreat into their lurking places, as all bullies do upon such occasions, and then our poor, deluded peasantry, would not be led astray by the abominable falsehoods that are uttered in their mock parliament, and spread about the country through the medium of newspapers, supported by the tax which is levied on the people; who, from their childhood, are taught to detest every thing English. And your lordships may depend upon it, that Protestants, Orangemen, and Englishmen, are synonymous terms, and not in the least qualified by any vote that any member of parliament may give; for all, in their estimation, are equally *heretics*. Our poor fellows certainly have a cause, and a most powerful one, if they did but know it, for hating England. For, my lords, it was this country that introduced the dominion of the Pope into Ireland, as from the most authentic documents it has been ascertained, that Christianity, in its purest form, prevailed in that island at the time of its invasion and subjugation by the English; who immediately set about the conversion of its inhabitants to Popery, and in the course of time so effectually prevailed, as to spread its baneful influence

throughout the land, from which it never has since recovered.

Nothing, indeed, my lords, can recover Ireland from her sad condition, but the same power which, under the blessing of the Almighty, has raised England to the high station she holds among the nations of the world—I mean the *Reformation*, which can only be effected by a scriptural education, and which in many parts of Ireland is working at this moment, and has been the means of converting above 1,000 persons from the errors of the Church of Rome within the last few months, and has created a degree of violence amongst the Priests that is quite intolerable. No meeting for the purpose of promoting the education of the people, and the distribution of the Holy Scriptures, can escape their notice.

About three months ago, my lords, a meeting of the London Hibernian School Society took place in the town of Carrick-on-Shannon, at which that gallant officer Admiral Sir Josias Rowley presided, and at which I was present. Some time after, a statement appeared in one of the newspapers, in the pay of the Dublin convention, giving a most insulting account of the transaction, and has since been published on a sheet of paper by itself, and dispersed throughout the country; three copies of which were sent to my house, and, with your lordships' permission, I should wish to read one paragraph from it:—

“ The technical details were, as usual, excellent—Lord Lorton seemed alternately to chuckle with delight at the denunciations against the adulteries of the —— of Babylon, and to swell with holy aristocratic rage at the occasional allusions to ‘ priestly influence.’ Lord Lorton! Aye, Lord and Legislator Lorton!! Here, among drivelling enthusiasts, and whining old women, were found, during the anxious deliberations of the Imperial Legislature,—a representative peer, and the grave, the beardless senator, his son. While others are employed in their places in Parliament, in alleviating the distresses of the people, and adjusting the interests of the empire, Lord Lorton, and the dignified and able stripling who represents Roscommon, are occupied in singing psalms and forwarding the mischievous designs of a

hypocritical faction. Shades of Charlemont, Donoughmore, Burke, and Grattan, defend us from such rulers! O! how would your generous spirits have once kindled with indignation at such criminality and folly! How would not your burning eloquence have consumed the insolent pretensions of ignorant and canting lords, with arrogant bearing and hearts ignoble! Was it decorous in members of the legislature to be thus regardless of the national weal and the distresses of the people, at a time when they engage the anxious attention of every benevolent and patriotic man in the empire? Was it politic to abet the proceedings of frantic or infatuated fanatics, who seek to dissever the ties that bind the Catholic people to their virtuous and disinterested pastors; and to exasperate still more seven millions of oppressed and unoffending people? Beware, my Lord Lorton, how you sanction this unnatural disruption. You but shake the pillars which sustain the social edifice, while you seek to crush those whom you are reported to have designated an 'Imperium in Imperio'—the Catholic Priesthood of Ireland; you undermine the very barrier which stands between the party and inevitable ruin. Should you proceed in smiting the shepherd, and thus scattering the flock, know that in their dispersion they would tear you to pieces. But, my lord, you essay 'to shut up the tide with doors.' The Catholic Clergy laugh to scorn your impotent efforts."

Now, my lords, this is but a trifling specimen of what is constantly circulating throughout every part of Ireland; but it naturally attracted my attention, and, in fact, gave me much satisfaction. For when I had the honour of seconding the Address to his Majesty on the opening of the session in the year 1824, I observed that an "Imperium in Imperio" existed in Ireland, and that it must be got under before we could expect to see that part of the empire brought into a state of tranquillity and prosperity. Your lordships will now perceive that I have been completely borne out in my assertion, by what I have just read, with, indeed, the addition of marking out the Romish Clergy for that power; one of whom, I have every reason to know, was the author of this production, and

of whose oratorical powers I have a slight sketch in my hand, and as it is but a few lines, I may be permitted to read it:—

“ Friends—I regret to have to mention, and verify the truth of my learned friend, who spoke before me, that Mahon has deserted our cause; but the time will come, when you will find we shall not be deceived. Saint Lorton shall no more ride rough-shod over the independence of Roscommon—then I expect you will rally round your cause, and support it from the bigotry that at present prevails. Blood has been shed in France,—blood has been shed in Spain and Italy,—and why should not Ireland assert her rights?”

This effusion was uttered by a reverend divine in the chapel of Roscommon, on Sunday, the 18th of June, the day before the election for that county was to commence; and from its being of so inflammatory a nature, I determined that it should be made as public as possible: but, as the truth of such a production, coming from one of the spiritual guides of the deluded peasantry, might be questioned, I desired to know if the Reporter (who went into the chapel for the purpose of taking down the speeches) could swear to the veracity of the article, which he at once did, and his affidavit is attached to this precious performance. This reverend person had received acts of kindness from me, and a subscription towards rebuilding his chapel!!! I may now make a remark to your lordships, which is, that Protestants and Roman Catholics will be equally benefited by an emancipation from such furious bigots; who (had they the power) would crush to atoms the former, and keep the bodies and minds of the latter in a state of slavery and debasement.

With this conviction on my mind, I trust your lordships will take into your most serious consideration the petition which I have now the honour to lay before you, as well as five others to the same effect; one from the Bishop and Clergy of the diocese of Killalla, one from the Bishop and Clergy of the diocese of Elphin, and another from the Bishop and Clergy of the diocese of Clogher. These are all couched in strong and respectful language, and coming from such a

body, so intimately acquainted with the actual state of the country, deserve, I must say, reflection and consideration not usually given to documents of a similar nature. The other two are, one from the parish of Donagh, in the county of Monaghan; and the other from the Presbyterian congregation of Glennan, in the parish of Donagh, in the same county. This last is more particularly worthy of attention, as it comes from a body of dissenting Protestants, who have, upon more occasions than one, been claimed as friendly to the Roman Catholic demands, and have thus been held up as a contrast to the clergy of the "Law Church," as the Roman Radicals are pleased to denominate the Protestant Establishment. It may be objected by some, that it is not consistent with the holy profession of the Church to interfere so much in political matters; but, my lords, when we observe the furious attacks that have been made, and are still making, upon the Establishment, we must clearly see that there is no alternative. Many of your lordships have probably heard of that celebrated Jesuit who writes under the signature of J. K. L., an extract from whose letter to a noble friend, (Lord Farnham,) whom I have not now the pleasure of seeing in his place, I shall beg leave to read, and leave it for your lordships' reflection.

"I think the Church Establishment must fall sooner or later, its merits in Ireland are too well known; it has been brought to the light, and its works being such as do not bear the light, it will, it must, suffer loss, as much as an impartial judgment can be passed upon it. Clamour, bigotry, enthusiasm, and a spirit of selfishness, constitute its present chief support; it derives no aid from reason, justice, or public utility: its old connexion with the Crown, and that wise aversion to experimental innovation which characterizes every wise government, unite to defend it. But if the passions of the people were calmed, some man with the spirit and power of Burke, who arranged chaos 'the civil list,' and purified, without injuring them, the revenues and prerogatives of the Crown itself—some such man would arise and free the nation from the reproach of the Irish Temporal

Establishment; he would relieve religion from an incubus, and the land and the country, with its proprietors and cultivators, from an intolerable pressure. The concession of the Catholic Claims would hasten this desirable result, not by any revolutionary movement, as your lordship seems to apprehend, but by removing an immense barrier, which the agitation of those claims now opposes to the progress of reason and justice; and by uniting all classes of Irishmen in labouring to renovate their country, and to restore her, divided and almost lifeless as she is, to a state of health and vigour. Can your lordship, laying your hand on your breast, appeal to your conscience and honour, and then say that the Irish Church Establishment requires no reform. It is impossible that you could, my lord, because it is monstrous to think of an annual income, amounting to several millions sterling, being appropriated in such a country as Ireland, to the maintenance of the pastors of less than one-thirtieth part of the population; laying aside all notice of the laws by which this revenue is protected and collected, their partial nature, the mode of administering them, and the character of the agents by whom they are executed. The English people are as yet but imperfectly acquainted of the nature or viciousness of this Establishment. We in Ireland have been accustomed to view it, from our infancy, and when men gaze for a considerable time at the *most hideous monster*, they can view it with diminished horror; but a man of reflection, living in Ireland, and coolly observing the workings of the Church Establishment, would seek for some likeness to it only among the *Priests of Juggernaut*, who sacrifice the poor naked human victims to their impure and detestable idols."

Bad as this may appear, my lords, it really amounts to nothing when it is to be stated that our highest dignitaries are personally insulted in the streets of Dublin, by wretched ignorant creatures instigated to such outrageous conduct by the tremendous denunciations which are uttered by the demagogues of the Roman Catholic Parliament of Ireland, and by the daily publications which are to be found in their

hired journals. In conclusion, I must remark to your lordships, that a secret Inquisition exists in Ireland, which works itself into almost every family, and from its baneful effects I would call upon your lordships to protect the country, and thus make the first step towards emancipation in the true sense of the word. Now, my lords, with many apologies for having thus occupied your lordships' time, I move that the several petitions (already mentioned) be received and read.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE THE EARL RODEN.

When the Right Honourable and Noble EARL OF RODEN, a resident Nobleman in Ireland, presented several petitions against the Roman Catholic Claims,—one being from upwards of 22,000 Protestants of the County of Londonderry, and others from the Protestants of the County of Tyrone, in Ireland,—on March 16th, 1827, in the House of Lords, the Noble Peer delivered the following eloquent, decisive, fearless, but Constitutional oration.

MY LORDS.—When I consider the importance of the subject on which these petitions are addressed to your lordships, I feel myself compelled to declare, in a few words, my opinion on the present condition of that country (Ireland) from which they have proceeded. But, first, I must express my regret, that on this great and important subject, the members of his Majesty's government are still divided in opinion,—my regret, that they do not yet consider it a subject fit to be decided by them;—but that rather they still reserve the decision of it as an apple of discord, to be thrown between the two parties in Ireland, who ground their own division upon the division that exists on this question among his Majesty's ministers. To this division in the Cabinet we must also trace the present

system of policy pursued by the Irish government—a system which its supporters term conciliatory, but which I consider weak and puerile—a policy, whose only result has been to draw down on it the disgust of the Irish Protestants, and the contempt of the Roman Catholics. But I trust, my lords, nay more, I firmly believe, that the time is not far distant, that the day is close at hand, when this division among the members of the government must cease to exist—when the government must take an influential part in the decision of this question—when the government, as one united body, must come forward and declare their determination to support the Protestant Church and Constitution in Ireland, or to support the Popish Ascendancy that now domineers over that country.

It has been said, my lords, here and elsewhere, that the present condition of Ireland cannot continue; that things cannot remain as they are. With this opinion I entirely concur, as I think it impossible that Roman Catholics should be allowed to legislate for a Protestant Church. For that I contend is the ultimate object of the Roman Catholics of Ireland; and this opinion I pronounce, not only on the authority of history, but from the acknowledgment of the Roman Catholics themselves, who declare that they look on their admission into this and the other House of Parliament, merely as a step to the intended overthrow of the Protestant Establishment. The speeches and measures of the Roman Catholic Association, and the concurrence of the Roman Catholic gentry and the general population, in those measures, will show, that the object of them all is one and the same—the subversion of the Protestant religion. Can then, I ask your lordships, can these things remain as they are? Shall we ever allow the Roman Catholics to prescribe laws for the Protestant Church of Ireland?

I have heard noble lords assert, that the treatment of Roman Catholics of Ireland is as bad as that suffered by the Greeks from the Turks—that one sect of Irishmen is persecuted by another, and that they are subject to a system of tyranny on account of their religious opinions. Is it so?

Yes, if there be religious persecutions in Ireland, it is the persecution inflicted by the Roman Catholics on the converts from Popery! If tyranny is exercised over men in Ireland, it is the tyranny employed by the Roman Catholic Priests over their congregations, to prevent them from shaking off the slavish yoke of Popery, and becoming converts to that glorious reformation which is now working its rapid way through every part of the country.

That great work has been censured by persons in other places, and in high authority, as a mere chimera.* I think differently, my lords; my sincere conviction is, that its success is the work of Heaven—the pure result of the preaching of the Word of God, and the operation of his Divine Spirit.

My Lords.—It has been urged as an argument in favour of concession to the Roman Catholics, that the refusal of it will drive them into rebellion. I do not believe that assertion; but even though I did believe that rebellion would be the result of our refusal, still I would consent to encounter the risk of their rebellion, immense an evil as I consider it, and deeply as I should regret its occurrence, as tending to suspend the benefits flowing from all the moral institutions and wholesome laws of the last fifty years,—yet still I would rather risk its occurrence, than allow the Protestant Constitution to be ruled by the legislation of men who, by the very essence of their religion, must be considered to hold a divided allegiance to a Protestant Establishment.

My lords, I must declare, that I am not satisfied with the present system of Irish government, or rather of no government at all—which, instead of allaying the evils of the country, increases and aggravates them by an hundred-fold—for proof of this, look to your lordships' own legislative measures. Two years ago your lordships passed a bill which has since been called the Algerine Act; which some of your lordships opposed, as infringing on popular liberties, but which I then supported, through a hope, indeed a certainty, that it was calculated to attain the object for which it was designed—

* Mr. Plunkett used this expression in the House of Commons.

I mean the suppression of party associations in Ireland, which have so long been the bane of that country—but what is the effect of that act? It put down the associations of Protestants, which had originally been formed for the protection of the laws and the Constitution.—(Cheers from the Opposition.) I understand the noble lords' cheering, but I do not complain that these Protestant associations were put down—they were no longer wanted;—but what I complain of is this, that though the Protestant associations yielded to the law, yet still, at this day,—two years after your bill—the Roman Catholic Association is in existence and in power, spreading its destructive poison to the remotest extremities of the land. I am induced to speak thus warmly on this state of things, by the anxious interest I feel for the happiness of the country in which I received my birth, in which I reside, and in which I hope I shall die.

But, my lords, I have heard it asserted that the Irish government has made attempts to put down this Roman Catholic Association—I say it has not—I say no attempt has been made to put it down—and, as a proof, it stands, my lords, before Parliament and Government at full work, unchecked in its operations—uninjured in its power. I may be told, indeed, of a prosecution that has been brought by the Attorney General for Ireland against one of its members, a gentleman of the name of Shiel, for a certain inflammatory speech delivered by him before the Association; but when your lordships remember the violent opinions and language used elsewhere by that same Attorney General, will you not agree with me, that it is a great hardship that Mr. Shiel should be prosecuted for his seditious speech, while the Attorney General for Ireland is allowed to diffuse, with impunity, opinions productive of the greatest mischief in the present state of Ireland. That condition of the country, combined with the existence of the Roman Catholic Association, is an indelible stain upon the character of the kingdom.

(The Noble Lord concluded amidst loud and continued cheering.)

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL OF LONGFORD.

In the House of Lords, May 17, 1825, on the second reading of the Roman Catholic Relief Bill being moved, the Right Honourable and Noble EARL OF LONGFORD, a resident Nobleman in Ireland, delivered his Constitutional sentiments on this subject in the following eloquent manner.

MY LORDS.—Living constantly among a Roman Catholic population, regarding them highly as individuals, and respecting them as a body collectively, it will be readily imagined that I am most anxious to meet the views of the Roman Catholics of Ireland with as much favour as any man. But after very mature consideration, I cannot bring myself to think that this bill will answer the sanguine expectations of those by whom it has been introduced into Parliament; or that it is a measure that can be put into execution without manifest danger to the Constitution.

In giving my decided opposition to this measure, my lords, I beg at the same time distinctly to state, that I am actuated by no spirit of hostility to the Roman Catholics. But, while I repeat that I hold them in very high regard, I must take leave to say, that I cannot at all see why they are to be admitted to a participation with Protestants of certain civil rights and political power in a free Protestant country.

It has been rather imputed to those who, like myself, my lords, are unfriendly to such admission, that we wish to visit with penal consequences their peculiar doctrines; but I desire to observe, that we do not in any degree wish to interfere with the religious opinions, nor do we at all presume to measure the speculative tenets, or to regulate the doctrines of the Roman Catholics; but we are determined that the Roman Catholics shall not interfere with ours. The reason of our refusal of such admission is founded upon the political con-

sequences that will follow upon our assent—political consequences that always have ensued, and that in my conscience I believe always will ensue, upon conceding those privileges to Roman Catholics which are now claimed by them. Those consequences lead to the perpetual interference of the Papal authority and influence, nominally in spiritual affairs alone, but actually in the general transactions and ordinary business of life. It has been deposed, indeed, by witnesses examined before your lordships, and by others, that this interference is strictly confined to spiritual matters and doctrine; but, how—and by whom is the line to be drawn that is to separate—in the judgment of a Roman Catholic for example—spiritual from temporal affairs. How can it be supposed that he who exercises an undoubted and unresisted influence in the one will not exert it in the other? Or that the power which guides a man's conduct in regard to spiritual things will abstain from directing it in respect to temporal things?

I am of opinion, my lords, that the Roman Catholic Priesthood are able to lead the people with great facility; and their own constitution is well calculated ever to respect the supremacy of Rome. The commands of the superior to the inferior admit of no dispute; while the principle of subjection in the inferior is as clearly defined as the right of the superior to his obedience. If they are to be emancipated, therefore, from the acknowledgment of that control recognized by our Constitution, while they continue subject to the Papal orders transmitted through their own clergy; to admit to a participation of civil and political privileges those who still refuse so to acknowledge a control which is submitted to by our own Church, will be to put the Roman Catholic clergy on a higher footing than our own; and more especially when, if I am rightly informed, that control has been submitted to in other countries and cases.

Under these circumstances, my lords, I cannot think that the preamble of this bill is fairly worded: it contains a part of the truth, but not the whole truth. It is entitled "A Bill for the removal of the Disqualifications under which his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects now labour—Whereas

the Protestant succession to the imperial Crown of this United Kingdom and its dependencies, is, by the Act for the further limitation of the Crown, and the better securing the liberties of the subject, established permanently and inviolably." But, there should have been added something to this effect: "An Act to admit and invest certain dignitaries and others of the Roman Catholic persuasion to and with political and civil privileges, which all experience had withdrawn from Protestant dignitaries and others of the same station, except on submission to a certain control, from all obedience to which, such Roman Catholics are hereby exempted." In short, to grant them those privileges while they continue to deny our control, will be virtually, to put them in a better situation than the members of our own Church.

I also except to the bill, my lords, on account of the power which the Roman Catholic Priesthood will exercise and do exercise over their flocks, to an extent greatly beyond direction in matters respecting their spiritual welfare. I know, indeed, that among the Roman Catholic clergy there are many honourable exceptions to this description of them. I have nothing to oppose to the praises which have been bestowed upon them by noble lords who have spoken before me. But we are not to eulogize individuals: our business is legislation.

I will ask, my lords, if we are to admit the Roman Catholic body to the highest places in the Constitution, what is to guarantee the Protestant Establishment? By the law none are admissible to offices of political trust, but those whose allegiance is perfect. Of all the Dissenters from the Establishment, I know of none whose allegiance is of necessity imperfect, except the Roman Catholics. Standing in the peculiar relation to us, which they do, in what light must they regard us? What must be the feeling of a really conscientious Roman Catholic (for it is useless to take notice of any other) towards the National Church Establishment? We are to consider in this question what has been done by the Protestants. Are not these dissenters from their faith

usurpers of the authority of their creed, despoilers of the property of their Church? In what light can they look upon us? We are voluntary seceders from them, as the other Dissenters are from the National Establishment. We did not willingly nor without considerable struggles separate from their corps. There is nothing in principle, in Christian-like feeling, in policy, or expediency, which requires us to make those concessions, or forbids our refusal of them.

A noble lord who preceded me, has said, it is time for us to divest ourselves of our prejudices; but surely that noble lord must feel that on questions of this kind, upon which men have been accustomed to hear particular opinions stated from their earliest infancy, it is impossible they should be altogether free from prejudice and bias. I am far indeed from speaking of those men who entertain those prejudices with a feeling of censure; they are frequently the bond of parental, filial, and conjugal connexions, and every other tie that binds man to man in relationship and friendship; and those feelings reflect the highest honour on men in private life, and render them the most amiable and estimable men in society. But, my lords, let it be remembered, that those prejudices are not all on one side. Much might be said about the eradicating of prejudices; but I think it would be a dangerous experiment. You may extinguish a particular religion, but are you sure you could extirpate prejudice?

As to what are called the just rights of the Roman Catholics, I cannot understand it, my lords; for I deny that the interests of the many should ever be sacrificed to the few. Expediency is sometimes talked of as a ground for conceding this measure, but that word has been latterly supplanted by another—necessity, which has been defined to be nothing short of a general threatening. This appears to me to be unfounded in fact. If I thought it had the least foundation, it would be with me an additional reason for resisting any thing like concession; but, as I have no such impression, I should be sorry to attribute such an opinion to the Roman Catholics. But, my lords, when this necessity is talked of

it reminds one of the tone adopted by the old Irish chieftains a form of expression less lengthy and more expressive certainly than we hear now; "you owe me a tribute, and if you don't."—(A laugh.)

But, my lords, setting those considerations aside, the question for us is, since the restrictions were imposed, has the country advanced or gone back? Is it not at a pitch of prosperity, wealth, and glory, which has been never equalled in ancient or modern history? Let us consider the power, capabilities, and resources which have developed themselves in this little contracted spot of the earth's surface—not the fruits of extraordinary individual talents; but the slow and gradual growth of ages, during which the oppressed Roman Catholics, as they are called, have enjoyed, in common with their Protestant brethren, the fruits of those councils from which, for their own advantage, as well as ours, they have been excluded.

With this fact, my lords, of the constant progressive improvement of the country under a Protestant Establishment and Constitution, I am very averse to anything like innovation; and it requires the strongest force of reasoning to convince me that a change in any degree is desirable. Until some more striking facts and arguments be brought forward I will stand by that system under which all our greatness and prosperity have been made. Indeed, I doubt whether any circumstances can change my opinion: but I am unwilling to give such a pledge, particularly when we see the strange things that are passing around us every day; but I cannot anticipate any change of circumstances which will justify the constitution of a free state, in admitting the Roman Catholics to the participation of political power. When I hear the recommendation of noble peers to make an innovation in the Constitution, I am reminded of what I once saw upon a tomb-stone, "I was well; I would be better—and here I am."

I will say, my lords, that there is no principle which ought to be more adhered to than the Union of Church and State. They have gone on strengthening and supporting each

other; but the measure proposed is calculated to produce a schism in them. I believe that those who recommend this measure are sincere in their opinions of its necessity; and without attributing any want of sincerity to them, I must say, that I cannot contemplate it in the same light that they do.

An argument has been put forth, this evening, my lords, namely, that the measure has been recommended to us by the decision of the House of Commons. I am far from saying that this is not a strong recommendation; but amongst the valuable privileges of the House of Peers, none is more important on the one hand, than to assist in the accomplishment of any measure which will be beneficial to the country, and on the other, when a measure is not beneficial, to arrest it in its progress. I think it will become the House manfully to declare that this bill ought not to pass, that we will therefore reject it. But, in support of the bill in the other House they had a mere trifling hesitating majority—not the fair decision of the great council of the nation, nor the unequivocal declaration of their opinion. And will your lordships be justified in passing a measure which does not appear to be the sense of the country, and barely the sense of the House of Commons?

It has been also said, my lords, that this is an auspicious time. It appears to me quite the reverse. The attention of the country from the highest to the lowest, has been engrossed with the consideration of this question; and whatever may be the decision of this night, it is impossible to suppose that it will not occupy their deep attention for some time to come. According to the provisions of the Constitution, the time cannot be far distant when the sense of the country may be taken in the most direct manner upon this subject. We will then know with tolerable exactness how to appreciate that increase of converts, as they have been called, to the Roman Catholic cause. We will then see if we are justified in taking that boasted majority for the sense of the country. I think not.

Protestant security, my lords, requires Protestant ascen-

dancy. Concessions to the Roman Catholics cannot follow, because the right to them does not exist—justice does not exact them—expediency does not require them—the public prosperity cannot be increased by granting them—and they are quite incompatible with that Protestant ascendancy, which is necessary for the welfare of the empire.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR CHARLES WETHERELL,

ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ENGLAND.

WHEN the order of the day was moved in the House of Commons, March 23d, 1821, for taking into consideration, the Report of the Roman Catholic Disability Removal Bill, the Right Honourable and Learned SIR CHARLES (then Mr.) WETHERELL, ATTORNEY GENERAL OF ENGLAND, addressed the House in the following historical, argumentative, and Constitutional language.

SIR.—In resisting the further progress of this bill, I am not about to contend for any factious or unsubstantial point, but for a leading and fundamental principle of the Protestant Constitution of this country. In its preamble the bill asserts as a fact that there was a time when Roman Catholics could take the oath of supremacy; and it is proposed therefore to restore that perverted and corrupted oath to its pristine condition, and to put such a construction upon it as to render it again palatable to Papists. This is an historical untruth. There never was a time when the oath introduced by the two statutes of Elizabeth was taken, or could be taken by Roman Catholics. It is my intention neither to understate nor to overstate any thing; but I understand the bill to assert, that the Roman Catholics were always ready to take the oath found in the two statutes of Elizabeth, according to

the meaning and interpretation introduced by Queen Elizabeth into her admonition. It is further asserted, that it is an oath which at this time may safely be taken by Roman Catholics.

Sir, after the death of Mary, Elizabeth re-instated the Reformation as it was in the reign of Henry VIII. but some strange gossiping tales got abroad, that the queen claimed the supremacy in a different kind and quality to that enjoyed by her royal father; accordingly an admonition was issued, addressed "to simple men," to counteract the notion that prevailed, that she demanded a right of personal ministry in the Church—such as the christening of infants, the churching of women, and so forth; in this document she said, that "she did not challenge any power of administering in the Church, wherein her subjects had been much abused by evil disposed persons." This was all the alteration made by her admonition and injunction on the oath of supremacy; "simple men" had been duped, and her object was to undeceive them, not to change the nature of the oath, which in the strongest and most comprehensive terms negatives the ecclesiastical supremacy of the Pope of Rome. If a Roman Catholic could take the oath then, there is no reason why he should not take it now. Upon this point I throw down the gauntlet, and dare any man to prove that I am incorrect in my assertion.

If there are persons, Sir, who will be duped or imposed upon by the assertion of the preamble, I am one of the "simple men" who will not be deceived by it. Dismissing the preamble and its historical untruth, what does the clause provide? It ought only to have added to the oath the exception in Queen Elizabeth's injunction; but, instead of doing so, it goes a great deal further to say that no foreign power has superiority or supremacy which conflicts with the civil duties of the king's subjects, or with the civil rights of the king's courts; it is a direct claimer on the part of the Roman Catholics of what Queen Elizabeth had disclaimed. For this reason I prefer the old oath to the new. It is a most preposterous and absurd mistatement.

But, Sir, it is not merely to the oath, but to the principle, to the political and general consequences of the bill, that I object. One political effect is, to admit Roman Catholic legislators, and to enable them to fill the highest departments of the State, with two exceptions; and this cannot be allowed without endangering the Protestant community. It is worth while to see how this object is carried into effect; how the Roman Catholic servants of the Crown are to execute the duties imposed upon them. It is admitted that they are not to interfere in ecclesiastical affairs: that they are not to advise the Crown as to any ecclesiastical appointments: so that this enabling, capacitating, authorizing bill, disables, incapacitates, and unauthorizes Roman Catholics with regard to all spiritual concerns.

Suppose, Sir, for instance, that one of these much-injured and long-suffering noblemen was appointed secretary of State, or premier of an administration, he could not recommend a bishop, or fill up any ecclesiastical preferment within his gift or patronage. The French have a *Ministre de Culte*; but such an officer is unknown here; and the Roman Catholic peer can only be half a minister, with half the power and half the duties that will belong to a Protestant. Thus this bill, pretending to erect a building, only half completes it, and leaves it open, naked, and unserviceable. This great and gross defect, this singular absurdity, is not to be laid to the charge of the eloquent gentleman who introduced the bill: the necessity of the case compels the insertion of it.

True it is, Sir, that, in such a case, ecclesiastical preferments are to be regulated by a commission, and that commission is to be named by the Crown; but, is it to be supposed, that the premier will not have his influence in this respect, and after all accomplish what it is the intention of the bill to avoid? I will now direct the attention of the supporters of this measure to the privy councillor's oath. By this oath, the privy councillor is bound not to advise the monarch on this or that particular measure, but on every question connected with the well-being of the State. What is the consequence? Why, if this measure were carried, we

must alter, not only the oath imposed by the statute of Queen Elizabeth, but the privy councillor's oath also.

But, Sir, if the Roman Catholic interferes in ecclesiastical matters, what penalty is meant to attach to the infraction of the law? Is it a fine of 6s. 8d., or of 3s. 4d.? I contend that the supporters of the bill, who consider those exclusions as contrary to the rights of the subject, and injurious to that fair and honourable ambition, which no man more ardently admires than I do, cannot give to the Roman Catholic an exalted situation in the State, without expunging the oath of Elizabeth, and entirely altering that administered to a privy councillor. With respect to the interference with ecclesiastical authority, this point can be illustrated in a very easy manner. Suppose a Roman Catholic holds the office of lord chamberlain, he could not even appoint a chaplain in ordinary to his Majesty: so that whatever ecclesiastical duty is attached to the office, the Roman Catholic liberators take care to transfer from him, and to impose the performance of that duty upon others.

Again, Sir, what will be the effect of the bill with respect to Roman Catholics sent out to govern any of our colonies? It will be described as a very hard thing that a man who has distinguished himself at Waterloo, should be prevented, on account of his religion from going out as governor of Jamaica, or of any other of our West India possessions. But if he were sent out under this bill, what must we do with him? Why, he must proceed to his destination in one frigate, and his ecclesiastical coadjutor in another. *The governor of a colony represents the sovereign. He has ecclesiastical power; in fact, he is the Head of the Church in that colony. Whatever power the king possesses in ecclesiastical matters, he, representing the king, has a right to exercise.* "But," say gentlemen, "how unjust it is that a brave man who has lost a limb in your service, should be debarred from proceeding to the colonies—from enjoying a splendid retirement as the reward of his services?" And how do those gentlemen propose to get over this injustice? Why, by placing the

Roman Catholic in the possession of an office, the duties of which he cannot perform!

But, Sir, what is likely to occur at the Council Board? It is well known that various disputes, connected with ecclesiastical matters, are referred to it for decision. The consequence must be, that, whenever a case of an ecclesiastical nature is called on at the Council Board, Mr. Buller will be compelled to say to any Roman Catholic privy councillor present—"You must leave the Board, or you will be guilty of an infraction of the law"—This is the mode in which gentlemen intend to conciliate the feelings of the Roman Catholic! Not a day would pass without the occurrence of some circumstances far more grating to the feelings of the Roman Catholic than anything which can happen at present. It will be necessary, drawn up as this bill is, to have two individuals in every office of the State; one to perform the civil, the other to take care of the ecclesiastical duty.

Sir, we are earnestly called upon to admit the Roman Catholics to political power. But, are we to admit them at the hazard of overturning all the old-established offices in the State? As the bill stands, they cannot be admitted to the old offices; new ones must be formed for them. Gentlemen who are in favour of their claims say, "We wish the Roman Catholics to participate in existing offices," but if they are placed in those offices, they cannot perform the duties attached to them.

It must be conceded to me, Sir, that no Roman Catholic can come into Parliament without possessing the right of originating new laws. I will not stop to inquire what number of Roman Catholics are likely to be elected, although I do not think with a right honourable gentleman that not more than twenty-four will be likely to gain admission. Those who support the bill ask, "What danger can be apprehended from a few Roman Catholic members?" The number likely to be returned is described as exceedingly limited—*rari nantes in gurgite vasto*. But I will remind the House, that twenty-four members may carry a great question. I will not

argue from the vices but from the virtues of the Roman Catholic body; and I will say, that if the same power be given to them which the Protestants enjoy, if they be honest men, they will endeavour to promote the interests of their own church. They may even conscientiously act against the Protestant Church which they are taught to consider less worthy than their own.

Gentlemen argue, that there is a great inconsistency in granting the elective franchise to the Roman Catholics, and refusing to let them sit in Parliament. I cannot see any inconsistency in allowing them to elect Protestant representatives, although, for the safety of the Constitution, they are themselves excluded from Parliament. But the advocates of the bill say, "You have conceded a great deal, and you must concede a great deal more."—Many gentlemen, forming a galaxy of eminent orators and statesmen, have censured LORD SOMERS, who, they observe, granted something at the Revolution, but not enough. Let those gentlemen, however, take care lest the same ridicule which is now cast on Lord Somers may not hereafter be applied to themselves. Perhaps it will at a future period be said of them—"It is true they have granted a good deal, but they have not granted all."—Such will be the language of those who will not be satisfied unless every thing be conceded to them, and who will exert their utmost power to arrive at the attainment of their wishes—*Nil actum reputans si quid superesset agendum.*

I have no doubt, Sir, that those who introduce this bill mean that it shall be an *ultimatum*—a final measure. But who is to bind posterity? I do not think, that, in point of fact, we are laying down a fixed and irrevocable settlement, but, on the contrary, that we are laying down a ground on which other demands and concessions are hereafter to be made. At one period, individuals were examined for the purpose of learning what concessions would put an end to all further demand? One of the persons thus interrogated said, that emancipation is not thought more of than the drop of ink with which the word is written; but if it went to

relieve the Roman Catholic from the burden of tithes, it would be considered as worth something. What are gentlemen doing? We are making a bargain between two parties, without knowing whether one of the parties will abide by the arrangement. I will appeal to the noble lord (Castle-reagh) whose diplomatic talents have been so serviceable to the country, whether, in the course of his experience, he has ever heard of a contract having been drawn up between two states, when it was not known whether one of the two contracting parties would agree to the terms proposed? Looking to the papers connected with this question, I find that there is no one to represent the Pope, no one to represent the Cardinals, no one to represent the Bishops; in short, no person to represent one of the parties, namely, the Clergy, who are deeply interested on this occasion. So that when Parliament puts the wax on one side of the agreement, the party who has not been consulted might turn the other side to the fire. Under all these circumstances I look upon the work not as done, but only as beginning to be done.

Sir.—Those who oppose the bill, are taunted as narrow-minded and illiberal men; but I will quote individuals; and the man can scarcely be accused of illiberality who thinks as they did. Mr. LOCKE, a writer of sober mind, never hesitated to say that the profession of the Roman Catholic religion in this country is a matter of toleration. Again, if we look to writers of a different class, who indulged in visionary, and theoretic systems of government—such men, for instance, as HOBBS, SIDNEY, and HARRINGTON, all of whom were liberal in their sentiments—we will find that every one of them laid it down as a principle, that *a non-conformist to the national Church is not to be admitted to the national councils or to the national Parliament*. Every one is aware that in republican Athens a non-conformist to the national religion was not allowed to sit in the senate; and in republican Rome, the man who did not profess the national religion was not employed in the business of the state. Whether we examine the sober opinions of LORD SOMERS and Mr. LOCKE, or the less sober sentiments of those visionary writers to whom I have

referred, it will be found, that the same principle of exclusion is maintained by them all. Such is the opinion of every respectable writer on the subject—with one exception—I allude to Dr. Paley, who observes, that Roman Catholics and Protestants may meet in Parliament in as friendly a manner as if they assembled to discuss questions of history or philosophy. Now, I cannot conceive that Protestants and Roman Catholics could meet in Parliament in precisely the same way as if they assembled to form a *hortus siccus*, or to discuss some point relative to the natural history of birds, beasts, and fishes. Such questions as these are not calculated to excite those passions which questions connected with station, property, rights, and immunities must produce.

In addition, Sir, to those whom I have mentioned as holding the doctrines which I profess, I may also name LORD ROSSLYN, LORD AUCKLAND, and LORD BOLTON; the two latter noblemen having held the office of secretary for Ireland—individuals, on whose opinions I will place as much reliance as on those of the right honourable gentleman below me. We are informed that Mr. Fox, Mr. Whitbread, Sir S. Romilly, and Sir A. Piggott, were favourable to the Roman Catholic cause; but when I mention LORD SOMERS and Mr. LOCKE, and the different writers I have previously adverted to, the balance, as far as names go, is entirely on our side.

Sir.—The honourable member for Knaresborough, (Sir J. Mackintosh,) whom we all consider, on subjects of history, as a sort of professor in this House, tells us, that in speaking of the power of the Pope, we are not to argue from occurrences that have taken place in barbarous times. I will not detain the House with any allusion to the Spanish Armada, to Titus Oates's Plot, or to matters which have happened at a very remote period; but I will refer to what has occurred in 1768; only about twenty years before the French Revolution, when the Pope excommunicated the Council of the prince of Parma. The French Government took up the subject, and the French parliament in 1768, and the French King in 1772, made it high treason to hold any

communication with the See of Rome. Now, Sir, what are we going to do? We are going, by the other bill, to legitimate, in the See of Rome, that right of communication—that right to carry on a secret correspondence—which, in 1772, was made high treason in France. In 1791, the French National Assembly decreed, that no such correspondence should be carried on with the See of Rome. So that we are about to declare, that no danger is to be apprehended from a system, which one of the most powerful monarchies in Europe deemed it necessary to forbid, lest it would operate prejudicially to the State.

I consider, Sir, this bill as eradicating from the British Constitution a principle, the rooting out of which will, sooner or later, involve the country in disturbance. I say sooner or later; for it will be found, that, because we have given a great deal, much more will be demanded from our posterity. The principle of this bill evidently is, that it shall go to a given length, and that hereafter this given length will be enlarged and amplified. I see nothing like finality in the bill; on the contrary, I view it as an opening through which future demands are to be made.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE HENRY GOULBURN,

CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND.

IN the House of Commons, April 21st, 1825, when the order of the day for resuming the adjourned debate on the second reading of the "Roman Catholic Bill" was moved, the Right Honourable HENRY GOULBURN, Chief Secretary for Ireland, addressed the House in the following nervous, argumentative, and truly Protestant oration.

SIR.—I have, on a former occasion, endeavoured to impress on the minds of gentlemen, that the contents of the bill now before the House, afford strong evidence that we will incur danger by adopting the course we are now called upon to pursue. I stated then, Sir, and I will repeat it, that I cannot comprehend the necessity of introducing all these securities, unless danger be apprehended. I propose now to examine the nature of those securities, to see how far they are applicable to meet the danger which they are intended to guard against, and to inquire in what degree they are calculated to afford protection against the risks which are likely to be incurred.

Those securities, Sir, are of three descriptions: first, the declarations which are contained in the preamble of the bill, second, the oaths required to be taken in certain cases, and, third, that which is considered the great security, the commission for the purpose of assuring the Crown of the loyalty of those who are hereafter to hold high situations in the Roman Catholic Church, by superintending and controlling the correspondence between the Roman Catholic bishops and foreign powers.

With respect, Sir, to the first class of securities—those contained in the preamble of the bill—they do not appear to

me to be in any degree valid. The first part of the preamble relates to the Protestant succession to the Throne of these realms, which it sets forth is "established permanently and inviolably." At present, the Protestantism of the Throne, and also the Protestantism of Parliament, are provided for; but the moment this bill is passed, the Protestantism of the Crown being preserved, it is declared that it will be of no consequence what is the religious persuasion of those who fill high political offices in the State. It is important to know how far this arrangement is satisfactory to those with whom we are now treating. We ought to consider how far this established Protestantism of the Crown, on which we so much rely, is likely to be attended to: we ought to examine into the degree of dependence which can be fairly placed on those who call for this bill. I think, Sir, I see in this measure, no slight indication of the feeling on this point, of those who are to be benefited by this bill. In my opinion, so far from this Protestantism of the Crown being viewed by this measure as inviolably fixed, it is considered as a matter that has its limits.

It is quite clear, Sir, that those who are connected with the measure, cast forward their views to that period when the Crown will be no longer Protestant. This is apparent from the letter of a gentleman whose opinions on this question have very great weight, and whose evidence before the committee has tended to alter the sentiments of the honourable member for Armagh (Brownlow) on this subject. I allude, Sir, to Mr. O'Connell, who has taken care to guard himself most sedulously in his expressions on this point. That gentleman said, "that the inviolability of the Protestant succession would be maintained in the present succession. There was not one," he observed, "amongst the Roman Catholics, who would wish to see it altered; in that feeling the Roman Catholics all concurred." But does not this point at a period when the present family might become extinct?—a contingency to which I advert with the most anxious desire and feeling that such a period may be far distant. Does not this seem to suppose, that a period might

arrive when Roman Catholics may become eligible to the throne?

The next point, Sir, to which the preamble adverts, is the discipline of the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland, which is to be permanently and inviolably established, in conformity with the Act of Union. If I correctly understand the Act of Union, the fair construction of that act is, that the only establishment shall be the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland, as it existed at the time of the Union. I do not think it was intended, at any period whatever, to place any other religion on a level with the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland; but I have no difficulty in saying, that there is, in the bill before the House, the first recognition of the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. I have heard my right honourable and learned friend, the Attorney General for Ireland, (Mr. Plunkett,) discuss this question; and what has he said? He stated, that so long as individuals remain merely bishops of the Roman Catholic Church *in* Ireland, it is legal and proper; but that when they denominate themselves bishops of the Roman Catholic Church *of* Ireland, it is illegal and improper. And yet, Sir, what are we now called upon to do? We are asked to recognize permanently a body of bishops of the Roman Catholic Church of Ireland, who are to be paid out of the general funds of this country. There is no one provision which I can discover, which goes to preserve the Established Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland as it was recognized at the Union. The Protestant Church of Ireland was, at the Union, permanently fixed, as the Established Church of that country. But now an attempt is made to place on a level with it the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland. When we see this, can we be idle enough to suppose that any confidence can be placed in the pompous declarations with which the measure is accompanied?

I come, in the next place, Sir, to the supposed security which will be derived from the oaths that are to be administered to Roman Catholics. And here I agree with the

honourable member for Corfe Castle (MR. BANKES) in the view which he has taken of those oaths. They apply only to temporal matters, but leave untouched the spiritual and ecclesiastical authority of a foreign power. I will ask gentlemen, as the honourable member has done, to look at the situation in which they will be placed, if this bill passes. We are obliged to take the oath of supremacy, declaring that the ecclesiastical and spiritual authority of the Pope is not, and never should be recognized in this realm. And yet, by this act, other persons will be allowed to sit in Parliament who do recognize that spiritual and ecclesiastical dominion. I think that the honourable baronet (Burdett), and those who drew up the bill, ought not to have placed the House in such a difficult situation as this. Gentlemen are called on, either to perjure themselves, or to alter the plain and evident meaning of words. A considerable portion of those oaths is, I know, taken from the acts already passed for the general relief of the Roman Catholics; but, notwithstanding this, I cannot help looking at the measure with very great jealousy and suspicion.

I conceive, Sir, that those concessions are fraught with danger to the Church Establishment; and in my opinion, the oaths attached to the bill afford the Protestants very little security. The Roman Catholics are called on by the oath, to disclaim and disavow any intention to subvert the Established Church. That is clear and decisive; but, when it is accompanied by the words "for the purpose of substituting a Roman Catholic Establishment in its stead," I will ask, Sir, whether it does not allow a considerable degree of latitude for invading the rights of the Protestant Establishment, so long as there is not, in the mind of the invader, a desire to establish the Roman Catholic Church in its room? I can acquit the Roman Catholics of any wish to overturn the Protestant Church; but, for all that, I can easily conceive, that a conscientious Roman Catholic might think himself justified in removing an establishment which he looked upon as a monstrous heresy and a great evil. Such a man might think it a moral duty, intimately connected with moral

principle, to remove a church, which appeared to him to produce no benefit, but to create evil.

And, while I am on this point, Sir, I wish the House to look at the sentiments promulgated by an individual who is highly respected by the Roman Catholic body—I mean Dr. Doyle. Gentlemen have, in the course of the debate, referred to that reverend prelate, and I wish them to examine the terms in which he has spoken of the Protestant Establishment. He has stated, that such an establishment does not exist in any other civilized country, and that it is peculiarly unsuited to a nation almost exclusively devoted to tillage. He has asked, what does the Protestant clergyman give to the peasant for the tithes he receives from him? Speaking of the Protestant Church he exclaimed, "*From what heaven have you fallen!* Tell us the names of the bishops by whom your Establishment was founded. Turn over books, and point out to us the names of the Apostles who were members of your Church—a Church jointly formed, in its early history, of laymen and ecclesiastics, whose hypocrisy, lies, and crimes, were most disgraceful."

But, Sir, there is another circumstance to which I beg to call the attention of the House. In the bill which had been formerly introduced into this House by my right honourable friend, the Secretary of State for the Foreign Department (Canning), some efficient security had been proposed by means of an oath. The oath prescribed by that bill was to be administered to all ranks of the clergy; but, in the bill now before the House, the oath substituted for that to which I allude is only required to be taken by persons who are admitted to the office of dean or bishop. As far, therefore, as an oath can be obligatory, the one contained in the former bill bound all the Roman Catholic clergy of the kingdom against any attempt towards subverting the Established religion. The present bill, however, seems to be in this respect framed rather with a deference to Roman Catholic prejudices, than with any view towards the feelings of the Protestants, or towards providing a protection against any possible danger.

I come now, Sir, to the third security which the bill proposes to establish. This is the appointment of a commission of four Roman Catholic bishops, for the purpose of regulating the intercourse of the See of Rome with his Majesty's subjects in Ireland. But, even here the bill does not provide that they should disclose all that may be contained in such intercourse, nor, indeed, any part of it, unless they shall be of opinion that it is injurious to the tranquillity of the kingdom; thus leaving them to be the sole judges of the question. I do not know, Sir, by whose advice or at whose suggestion, this new cabinet has been formed, or upon what principle of Constitutional policy it is, that a commission of four Roman Catholic bishops is thought necessary to advise his Majesty on matters of such importance as the tranquillity and safety of the State. Still less, Sir, can I perceive what great advantages may be expected to result from this commission, whose chief, if not sole duty will be, to report only such matters as will be perfectly innoxious. That much mischief may be done by a commission intrusted with such powers, I see too plainly; and, if I were a person desirous of carrying on an intercourse dangerous in time of peace, or traitorous in time of war, I would wish for no more efficient engine than this commission. I congratulate England upon the protection which has been thus provided for her Establishment, for the security of her civil and religious liberties, and upon the appointment of four Roman Catholic bishops to be the guardians of the Protestant religion! So much for the protection which it was said has been raised against the possibility of innovation! So much for the premium which was held out for making concessions to the Roman Catholics!

But, Sir, I shall perhaps be told, that not only these but other advantages, are afterwards to spring up and to be introduced when the law now proposed shall have been carried into full effect. I know that it is the favourite policy of those gentlemen who advocate this bill, to keep out of sight many of the ulterior measures with which, if it should once be carried, they hope to follow it up. On such, how-

ever, as met the public view, I shall make a few observations. In the first place, it is offered to give up the franchise of the forty-shilling freeholders; and this is presented as a sort of *bonus* either to induce the House to pass this bill, or to reward them for having done so. I wish, however, to ask the honourable members who have espoused this proposition, whether they intend to effect this disfranchisement at once? They admit that the existence of the forty-shilling freeholders is an evil in the system of Ireland, and that it ought to be abolished. Can they abolish it at present; or, must they not wait the expiration of leases now in existence? One of these two things they must be prepared to do. The first, for my own part, I think practicable, and if they propose to do the second, then, I ask the honourable members for Armagh and Down, what becomes, in the mean time, of the security against the evils which they admit?

To the proposition for paying the Roman Catholic clergy in such manner as befits their rank and utility, I have no hesitation in agreeing. But, Sir, to recognize the several dignities which they enjoy in their own church, and to give to them all the character and station of a regular Establishment, I cannot consent, because I think to do so would be to inflict a great evil on Ireland. To have in every diocese two bishops of opposite principles in religion, would give rise to frequent disputes, and still more frequent inconveniences, and must, ultimately, be attended with danger to the country. Such a course, too, would be directly at variance with the principles of the Reformation.

If, Sir, as has been said more than once upon recent occasions, the Roman Catholic religion has lost some of those features, which used to be its distinguishing characteristics—if it be so altered as to have nearly approximated to the Church of England, as some of the persons who have given evidence on the committee would have it believed, why should not steps be taken to unite them, to reconcile opinions now so nearly the same, and to remove that *odium theologicum*, which an honourable and learned gentleman has said becomes always more violent in an inverse proportion, as the

disputants approach nearer to each other. But have gentlemen, who advocate the creating an Establishment for the Roman Catholic clergy, well considered whether the country will be disposed to pay additional taxes for the support of that church? If the Protestants of England and the Episcopalians of Scotland even were content to do so, what feeling would be entertained upon the subject by the numerous body of Dissenters?

If, Sir, the Roman Catholic clergy permitted their flocks to consult the Scriptures as the rule of their moral conduct, then, perhaps, some of the danger with which the present measure appears to be fraught would be removed; but while, by the authority of the Pope, that which is obviously a crime in morals, is held to be no crime in religion, it is impossible to deny the existence of this danger. The objections which the Roman Catholics have against the differences of the Scriptures cannot be forgotten; and, notwithstanding the explanations which have been attempted on this point, the fact remains sufficiently proved. Even Dr. Doyle, in his recent examination, said, in answering a question as to the infallibility of the Church, that it is held to be infallible on all the articles of faith, and with respect to the moral virtues.

The bill before the House, Sir, gives to the Roman Catholics a power of combining, which they do not possess at present; and, since their Church is believed by them to be infallible on all points of moral duty, they may not only be induced but compelled to combine for any purpose which may seem desirable to the Head of the Church. Without attempting to magnify this danger, it is enough for me to point out its existence, for the purpose of justifying my refusal to assent to anything which may by a possibility, however remote, bring the Established Church into jeopardy.

Attempts, Sir, have already been made to invade the property of the Church, and particularly the possessions attached to it in Ireland. The honourable member for Montrose (Hume), whose activity would not prevent him from letting slip any advantage that may offer for effecting that system of reduction of which he is the advocate, would find his efforts

countenanced and fortified by Roman Catholic members, who could not be expected to have any other feelings than those of hostility against the Church Establishment. It is impossible to foresee what might be the success of a renewal of those attempts which have been hitherto defeated, when they should be backed by the influence to which I allude.

Looking, therefore, Sir, at the bill in the various points of view which present themselves, I believe that it will aggravate the evils which it pretends to remedy. Such are the objections which I feel against this measure; and a sense of the duty which rests upon me, and an earnest desire to preserve the Established religion and the liberties of the country from all crafty devices and open attacks which should be attempted against them, compel me to express those objections. From a sincere belief that the bill now before the House is only the opening to a series of measures, the ultimate object of which is the subversion of those principles on which the Reformation was effected, and the Revolution was established, I offer it my decided opposition, and I trust that I shall have the support of the House in the vote which I intend to give.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR JOHN NICHOLL.

In the House of Commons, February 3d, 1812, Lord Morpeth having moved "That this House will resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into consideration the present state of Ireland," the Right Honourable SIR JOHN NICHOLL, after a few introductory observations, and remarking that the motion, although, in words, it formed a very general proposition, yet appeared to have been limited by the Noble Lord who introduced it to the consideration of what is usually called the Roman Catholic Question, proceeded in the following eloquent manner.

SIR.—In order to arrive at a correct judgment upon the subject of the Roman Catholic Question, it is proper to divest it of all terms and names which only tend to distort it; to separate it from general topics, with which it is very remotely connected; to mark out the true point for consideration, and to keep that point constantly in view; to ascertain where the presumption lies, and to which side the burden of proof belongs. It is not altogether unnecessary to guard ourselves on these particulars, for, in these discussions, we are in the habit of hearing much of excluding the Roman Catholics from their "natural rights," of depriving them of their "Constitutional privileges," of Roman Catholic "emancipation," as if they were in a state of slavery: we hear declamations on the odiousness of "persecution and intolerance," and on the value of "civil and religious liberty," as if there were many conflicting opinions upon those subjects.

In the present enlightened state of society, Sir, there is hardly an educated and intelligent person who does not hold in detestation and abhorrence, any approach towards persecution and intolerance; who does not hold, in the highest estimation, the blessings of civil and religious liberty. Surely

it is not necessary that a man should cease to be a Christian, in order not to be a bigot; or should lay aside religious preference, and become equally indifferent to all religions, in order not to be intolerant. If those, who, from a regard to toleration itself, and to civil liberty, are anxious to preserve the Constitution in Church and State, as at present by law established, are yet to be charged with attempting to raise a cry of "no Popery," and of "the Church being in danger," when, in reality, an attempt is made artfully to raise a cry against them of bigotry, persecution, and intolerance, the artifice ought to be pointed out and guarded against.

On the one hand, Sir, no person can seriously believe that those respectable members of the legislature, who think that further concessions ought to be granted to the Roman Catholics, have it in view to pull down the Church of England and to introduce Popery; on the other hand, this admission may fairly be claimed from their candour, that those who think the concessions ought not to be granted, have yet no disposition to persecution and intolerance. The true ground, upon which we ought fairly to meet, is this, can these concessions be made with safety to the Constitution? If they can, reason and justice appear to require that they should be granted; if they cannot, reason and justice, justice to the rest of the nation, to the Protestants of Ireland in particular, and even to the Roman Catholics themselves, require that they should be withheld.

Perhaps the very term "concessions" will be objected to. The Roman Catholics, it will be said, do not come to ask concessions, but to demand their rights, their birthrights, their natural rights. In this country it is rather too late to enter into a discussion of the "natural rights of man." In constituted societies natural rights must necessarily be abridged for the promotion and security of social order. The Constitution of this country has already defined what portion of those rights must be taken away; we must presume that as large a portion of our natural rights has been left to us, as is consistent with the order and happiness of civil society; if there has not, let it be fairly and openly

avowed, that it is the Constitution itself you propose to alter.

Instead of thus avowing the real proposition, other terms are resorted to; it is their "Constitutional privileges," "their share in the Constitution," that the Roman Catholics claim. The fallacy of this pretension exposes itself. Where are these privileges to be found but in the laws of the Constitution? If the laws give these privileges, it is unnecessary to apply to Parliament; they already have them. If the laws exclude them from these privileges; then, again, it is the Constitution you propose to alter.

Terms, however, Sir, still less defined, are then resorted to. The "principle and spirit" of the Constitution, "these would extend religious liberty as widely as possible." Thank God! they would carry the blessings of toleration as far as can possibly be done with safety to the Constitution itself. But it is still to be presumed, that the laws which have, at various times, been made for the improvement of the Constitution, have been framed in its true "spirit and principle," and with a due regard to "religious liberty;" and yet, hitherto, it has not been thought safe by those laws to concede to the Roman Catholics what they now demand. What is the very leading principle and essential character of our Constitutional laws, so far as they regard this subject? the security of the Protestant Establishment. It was, Sir, for the sake of securing the Protestant Church, that the Revolution, so fondly termed the Glorious Revolution, was principally effected. It is for the security of that Church, that the Sovereign must be a Protestant; that the royal consort must be a Protestant; that the ministers of the sovereign must be Protestant; that the Parliament must be Protestant. It is for the security of that Church that the House of Brunswick sits upon the British throne; why, then, the Constitutional principle of extending religious liberty has its boundary; it is limited by whatever is necessary to the security of the Protestant Established Church.

Let it, Sir, at the same time, be recollected, that this Constitutional anxiety for the safety of the Protestant Church,

is not founded in a bigoted hostility to Popery, merely as a different mode of worship, and a different construction of Divine Revelation,—not founded merely in religious preference, and in a difference of tenets; but it is founded also in an anxiety for the very safety of civil and religious liberty—an anxiety growing out of experience. Experience has proved that the Roman Catholic Church has a strong tendency to arbitrary power and to intolerance,—experience taught our ancestors at the Revolution, (and its impressions should not be effaced from our recollection, nor from that of our latest posterity,) that Popery, on the one hand, and Puritanism, on the other, are not very congenial with civil and religious liberty. The Church of England, standing between the two extremes, has been found favourable to both; and its altar is considered as the soundest basis on which to set up the palladium of our national freedom.

Seeing, then, Sir, that the Constitution itself, particularly as settled, in this respect, at the Revolution, and as it exists (with some subsequent improvements) at this day, has, hitherto, thought it necessary to exclude the Roman Catholics from a certain portion of the government of the country; seeing, also, that the same exclusion existed in Ireland, while a separate kingdom and having a distinct legislature, and that it was not only continued upon the Union between the two kingdoms, (whatever might be the expectations formed by the Roman Catholics of any subsequent change,) but that the preservation of the Established Church of England and Ireland has been expressly declared to be “an essential and fundamental part of the Union,” where lies the presumption? It is not meant to be asserted that the legislature may not make alterations and improvements in the Constitution, (so far, at least, as is consistent with good faith to the Protestants of Ireland, who are parties very importantly interested in this question, both in the preservation of their Church and their property); but all that is, at present, attempted to be established, is the true ground upon which the consideration of the question commences, and from which it sets out. Surely it must be admitted, that the presumption

is in favour of the existing constitution, and the burden of proof lies upon the Roman Catholic; he and his advocates must make out their reasons for altering the Constitution. Here is no new principle of exclusion to be set up—no established privileges to be taken away. The Roman Catholic has no right to call upon his opponents to argue this as a question of exclusion and restriction, against which the presumption lies; that question has been already decided by the Constitution; he must establish his case for altering the Constitution, and must show, that what hitherto could not be done with safety and propriety, may now be effected with advantage and with security.

Not only, Sir, does the proof lie upon the Roman Catholics, but its clearness must be proportioned to the magnitude of what is asked, and the risk in granting it. At present no specific proposition is brought forward; yet, on the other hand, no former demands are given up, nor are any counter concessions offered. Referring, therefore, to former claims, they ask, and they propose to accept, no less than “full, complete, unqualified participation of political power.”

Now, Sir, if, upon examination, this shall appear not to be giving a little on the part of the Protestant government in order to confer a great benefit on the whole Roman Catholic body, but that, while it is conferring comparatively a small benefit upon Roman Catholics in general, it may be risking every thing to the Protestant Establishments, particularly to those of Ireland—in that case, the safety of the measure should be made out to be clear and manifest; its safety should be proved, not by specious reasonings and theoretical refinements, for against those are to be placed past experience, and the uniform decisions of our ancestors. The chance of partial benefit will not justify the risk of universal calamity.

Under the Constitution, as it exists, the nation has enjoyed the greatest blessings; liberty—toleration—wealth—tranquillity—external greatness—and domestic happiness. Before we risk these enjoyments, by an important alteration in the Constitution,—by admitting into a full participation of

the powers of the State, a description of persons whom the Constitution (no matter for what cause, religious or other) has hitherto judged it necessary to exclude, it ought to be made clear, almost to moral demonstration, that the change can be safely made.

Let, then, Sir, the true question for consideration be constantly kept in sight. It is not whether the Roman Catholics are loyal; the great body of them are loyally attached to the Constitution and to the empire, and would be more universally so, were they not led astray by wicked and designing persons, who, to answer purposes of their own, endeavour to excite the Roman Catholics to turbulence. It is not, whether they shall have a full toleration; they have it already. It is not whether they shall be protected in their persons and in their property; they are under the protection of the same laws as the rest of the King's subjects:—but whether they shall unconditionally share in every part of political power?

Sir, that some qualifications may be required for admission into the exercise of particular parts of political power will hardly be denied, since it is a principle that runs through almost every branch of our constitutional law. That religious opinion may be a proper qualification, should not be brought into discussion; otherwise it may be necessary to defend the propriety of requiring the Sovereign himself to be Protestant;—but the true point to be discussed (from which ground the advocates of the Roman Catholics should not be suffered to shift the question) is this, *the necessity and safety of making the change, and which can only be established by some great change of circumstances.*

What, then, is this great change?—Has the Roman Catholic religion changed its tendency and its great leading characters?—Invidious imputations against that religion should be carefully avoided. Whether the principle of a dispensing and a deposing power, and of keeping faith with heretics, now or ever did exist, need not to be discussed. How far the abuse of such a pretension might take place to mislead the low and ignorant, may be one question; but against the enlightened Roman Catholics, against the higher orders of

that persuasion, the imputation of such principles must be unfounded.

But the political tendency of the Roman Catholic religion to arbitrary power and intolerance, and its leading characters, namely, the dominion of the Priesthood over the flock, and the authority of the Pope over the Priesthood—are these qualities changed?—and while they exist, can these claims be safely admitted?

What, Sir, is this power of the Pope? an authority of a most extensive kind, vested in a foreigner, not under the control of the State: and that foreigner (whatever be the character of the individual who, at present, fills the station) must be, as long as Europe remains in its present condition, a mere instrument in the hands of France.

The influence, Sir, of the Priesthood over the flock, is also nearly without limit; it is not confined to religious instruction, but extends itself into all their civil, their social, and their domestic concerns. The tendency of such an influence, under such an authority, has shown itself in all past times.

The existence of dangers from these circumstances has been so repeatedly admitted by the best friends of the Roman Catholic cause, that it seems unnecessary to enter into a discussion of it. By the best friends of the Roman Catholics are meant, not those who are endeavouring to mislead and inflame them for views of their own, but those respectable members of the two Houses of Parliament, who, at different times, have brought forward and supported their petitions. They have been sensible of these dangers, and have repeatedly and distinctly admitted their existence. A short passage or two from the celebrated Letter of a noble lord (Grenville) entitled to high respect, will serve to prove the assertion.—“With the just and salutary extension of civil rights to your body must be combined, if tranquillity and union be our object, other extensive and complicated arrangements—all due provision must be made for the inviolable maintenance of the religious and civil establishments of the United Kingdom: such at least have always been my

own declared opinions.”—“ Among these measures I pointed out the proposal of vesting in the Crown an effectual negative on the appointment of your bishops. That suggestion had previously been brought forward in the House of Commons to meet the just expectations, not of any bigoted or interested champions of intolerance, but of men of the purest intentions and most enlightened judgment—men willing to do all justice to the loyalty of your present bishops, but not unreasonably alarmed at any possibility by which functions of such extensive influence might hereafter be connected with a foreign interest hostile to the tranquillity of your country: a danger recently very much increased by the captivity and deposal of the Head of your Church, by the seizure of his dominions, and by the declared intention of that hostile government to assume in future, the exclusive nomination of his successors.”—“ When I speak of the necessity of combining, with the accomplishment of your wishes, provisions of just security to others, I am no less desirous of consulting every reasonable apprehension on your part. To the form indeed of those securities I attach comparatively little importance.”

The necessity, then, Sir, of securities, in some form or other, against foreign influence,—of complicated arrangements for domestic tranquillity,—of provisions for the inviolable maintenance of the civil and religious establishments of the United Kingdom, is here distinctly stated, not by a “bigoted champion of intolerance,” but by the great leader of the Roman Catholic advocates. The same admission has been repeatedly made by other eminent supporters of the Roman Catholic cause.

Whether any such barriers and arrangements can be devised as shall afford sufficient security, cannot at present be examined; because none are now proposed—nor hitherto have any that appear satisfactory been anywhere stated. The negative to be vested in the Crown on the appointment of bishops, has since been rejected and disavowed by the Roman Catholics, notwithstanding “the acquiescence of their church in similar arrangement under other govern-

ments, and the express consent formally given by the most considerable of their own bishops." The demand now seems to be made on their part, of unconditional concession, without any guard or security whatever; and, what is still more strange, these supporters of the Roman Catholics, from some unaccountable change in their opinions, appear ready to go that length in their concessions!!! And what is it that is now demanded? That which does not exist in any country, Roman Catholic or Protestant; namely, that the government of the Church shall be wholly independent of the State, while the members of that church thus denying the authority of the State shall yet fully partake in the exercise of all its political powers.

The want, Sir, of these securities (no proposition of any such being made, nor any plan of them suggested for consideration; on the contrary, the necessity of them being now apparently denied) might furnish sufficient grounds for rejecting the present motion at once. For, surely, in a matter of this importance and magnitude, Parliament may reasonably expect some statement at least to be made of what is intended to be afterwards proposed, before it takes any one step towards giving its countenance and encouragement to the measure.

But, Sir, the proposition should not be rejected upon partial considerations and formal objections, which may only serve to keep alive the continued agitation of a subject so desirable to be set at rest. It will be more frank and proper to consider briefly, the advantages which have been at different times suggested as likely to arise from these concessions, and the securities which have been hinted at as tending to prevent danger.

Among the advantages suggested, it is said that the empire will be consolidated and strengthened; and the Roman Catholics be induced more freely to enter our fleets and armies;—that conciliation and satisfaction will be produced;—and, it is added that the concessions must ultimately be granted, because demanded by so large a body of subjects.

In regard, Sir, to the consolidation of the empire, much doubt may be entertained whether that consequence is not

visionary—nay, whether to admit the Roman Catholics to a full participation of power, will not be sowing seeds of disunion and contest in the government and in the empire. Discordant materials seldom coalesce and unite so as to produce strength. It may be asked, why should difference of religious opinions produce political discord? It is sufficient to answer, that it always has produced that effect—that it produces it at the present moment—and that until human nature is altered, and man, under the lights of the new philosophy, shall cease to be a religious animal, it will probably continue to produce the same effect, and to be made (as it has been termed) a stepping-stone to ambition, and to the acquisition of political power.

It has, indeed, been asserted that this equality of political power will even tend to the security of the Protestant interests in Ireland!—but, as the reasonings upon which the assertion was made, have not been disclosed, it seems difficult to conjecture how the increased power of the Roman Catholics is to strengthen the security of the Irish Protestants, in the enjoyment either of their altars or of their estates!

The consolidation of the empire, Sir, (which is the proposed advantage now under examination,) appears to have been much more effectually secured by the legislative Union of the three kingdoms.—That union will be best cemented by the communication of commercial advantages, and of agricultural improvements; by the interchange of personal kindness, and a free intercourse between the people; by laying aside all local distinction, and considering the three kingdoms as one country; by ceasing to misrepresent the truth, and to impose upon the ignorant by holding out to the Irish that they are a neglected, degraded, and oppressed part of the nation. Notwithstanding these misrepresentations, the great body is attached to the empire, and not disposed to separate from Great Britain, or to unite themselves to France; they promptly and gallantly enter our fleets and armies; nay, it is frequently asserted in this House, that they

fight the battles of the country, even beyond their proportionate numbers.

The exclusion, Sir, which, in truth, does not extend to above forty offices, to high commands in the army and navy, and to seats in the legislature, situations certainly of high value to the superior order of the Roman Catholics, and, by refined reasoning, of some value even to the lower orders,—does not come sufficiently near to the latter to affect them very sensibly; and, probably, does not cause one man the less to enlist as a soldier, or to enter as a sailor. Let it, however, not be understood that any man ought unnecessarily to be excluded from situations that are open to his fellow-subjects—but that is a question of political expediency. The Constitution must balance, and, it is to be presumed, has weighed the advantages and disadvantages—and the disadvantages (so far as respects the strength and consolidation of the empire) of excluding even the higher classes from the situations referred to, do not appear to possess that extreme importance which is attempted to be given to them.

The hardship, Sir, upon the higher classes is certainly considerable, but stands justified by the grounds of expediency upon which the Constitution has founded the exclusion. In point of principle, however, the hardship is diminished by the Union: since the Roman Catholics, who, while Ireland was a separate kingdom, formed three-fifths of the population of that country, and were yet excluded from its government, may now, with more appearance of justice, be excluded from sharing in the government of the United Empire, of whose entire population they form only one-fifth part.

The next advantage held out, is “conciliation and satisfaction.” That concession will conciliate and satisfy the Roman Catholics is at least contrary to past experience; the fact being, that while restriction was most severe, the Roman Catholics were most quiet; and ever since concessions have begun, they have been most dissatisfied; and their demands have progressively increased. The fact only is

stated. That some inconvenience may have attended the taking off restrictions, furnishes no sufficient reason against the propriety of that measure—far otherwise—still less, would it justify the re-enacting of those restrictions. But when conciliation and satisfaction are held out as advantages which would follow from concession, past experience renders it probable that the expectation of those consequences may be disappointed.

Suppose, Sir, that all the demands now made were conceded; would the measure stop here? would the Roman Catholics be satisfied?—That is hardly possible; for other measures, some of smaller, some of greater importance, must follow, because they would stand upon the same principle—such as the repeal of all restrictions upon the English Roman Catholics—the repeal of the Corporation and Test Acts—the non-payment of tithes by the Irish Roman Catholics to the Protestant Establishment—a Roman Catholic Establishment in Ireland. After these, would the Protestant Church of Ireland be quite secure?—would the estates held by Protestants remain unassailed?—and are we quite sure that an attempt at Roman Catholic ascendancy would not be made even in this country? Great privileges have been already granted to the Roman Catholics; not only the free and secure exercise of their religion, and equal protection to their persons and property, but a considerable share of political power has been conceded to them by the elective franchise.—The elective franchise has given them an extensive influence over the Protestants themselves;—it has made the voice of the Roman Catholics to be heard pretty distinctly in the legislature. There is no danger of their interests being overlooked and neglected.

But, Sir, it is said that, “the concession must be made; it is demanded by four millions of subjects. In this demand they are determined to persevere year after year, till they obtain it from Parliament;” nay, even menaces are insinuated—“insurrection and rebellion—the dissolution of the Union—and a total separation between the two countries.”

Sir, the firmness of the legislature in the discharge of its

duty to the nation is not to be alarmed by such considerations. Menaces injure rather than assist the cause they are meant to promote. They will not extort concessions. Extorted concessions never yet produced conciliation; they only serve to degrade those from whom they are extorted. The very attitude of intimidation assumed by the Roman Catholics in Ireland seems of itself a strong objection to the making of any concession at this time.

The Roman Catholic body, it is true, are numerous, brave, high-spirited, firm, and attached to their religion; but their Protestant fellow-subjects, also, are not deficient in those qualities, and in numbers are four to one. The legislature will not be readily prevailed upon to give up the Protestant ascendancy. The kindness of the Protestants to their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects has no other boundary than what is necessary to the security of their own constitutional establishments in Church and State; but they must have security. The very numbers of the Roman Catholics increase the danger of admitting them to a full share of power. If they were few, the boon might be granted with greater safety; but their numbers, though in some respects strengthening their claims, yet also fortifies the ground of refusal, and that on the main point,—namely, security.

What then, Sir, is the security? Of special arrangements for domestic tranquillity, and barriers against foreign influence, we hear nothing—the only security is one which the Constitution always provides, namely, a Protestant Sovereign.

In the first place, Sir, the Constitution has hitherto not thought that alone a sufficient security; but it has encircled the throne with Protestant Ministers, and with a Protestant Parliament. Stepping down, however, from that ground, yet looking prospectively to a future period, (for, in a matter of such extreme importance, we must not confine our view to the present moment,) let us suppose a monarch secretly inclined to the Roman Catholic religion, or one wholly indifferent to all religion, attached to Roman Catholic favourites and Roman Catholic ministers—that, in the House of Commons, there were a hundred Roman Catholic members,

besides the usual influence of the Crown—that there were Roman Catholics mixed in all parts of the State, in all the powers of the government, and in high military command—backed by four millions of population, under the influence of a Roman Catholic priesthood; that priesthood under the authority of a foreign power; and that power, in effect, France;—would there be no danger to your ecclesiastical establishments, or your civil liberties, or rather, to both? for they will stand or fall together! Even all the arrangements and barriers that could be formed might be swept away, and the nation be involved in the horrors of a civil and religious war—it might have no resource but in resistance and revolution. If such calamities are even possible, the risk should not be run; even the risk, even the possibility, even the apprehension, would be a calamity. The nation would not passively deliver up their Protestant Church to a Roman Catholic court, nor their civil liberties to an arbitrary government.

Let us not mistake, Sir, the silence of the nation at the present moment for insensibility to this subject; still less for acquiescence in these claims. If the table of the House is not covered with petitions, it is only because the people at large think, at present, that there is no chance of the claims being conceded; but if they saw any appearance of it, the voice of the nation would probably be heard in pretty loud accents. Though the mild and benign spirit of toleration, which has long characterized our Constitution, and actuated our Church, has most happily extinguished religious antipathies, yet it is erroneous to suppose that the nation is become indifferent to its Protestant altars. It is anxious for their present security, not only from religious preference, but because they are satisfied that with the Protestant ascendancy are intimately interwoven the civil liberties of the people.

But, Sir, it may be asked, is the exclusion, then, necessarily to be perpetual?—certainly not:—a change of circumstances may render an extension of privileges secure. The most important change is from ignorance to knowledge, from turbulence to civil and social order. The danger, in a consi-

derable degree, arises from the great mass of the Roman Catholics,—those in whom the physical force of the body resides,—being, through their ignorance, under the entire dominion of their priesthood. This physical force, under that influence, connected with foreign authority, and guided by the higher classes fully sharing in political power, might be applied to the most dangerous purposes; and, unless human nature itself is changed, the attempt of so applying it is probable. A participation of power between parties who materially differ upon some great principle, has never yet existed without each attempting to gain the ascendancy. This is no reflection on the Roman Catholics. The love of power is universal. The Protestants equally possess it. They have the ascendancy—they have it justly; not only by the laws of the constitution, but as being four-fifths of the population of the empire. They use it mildly and moderately; they maintain full toleration; under their ascendancy the greatest blessings have been enjoyed by the nation; it is their right, nay, it is their duty, not to risk the loss of that ascendancy.

But, Sir, ameliorate the condition of the lower orders of the Roman Catholics as much as possible—educate them—enlighten them—enable them to read, to examine, and to decide for themselves upon the great principles and precepts of religion; teach them to estimate the true value of toleration, and the blessings of the British Constitution; let them show their change and their improvement by living in due submission and orderly obedience to the laws; then, and not till then, can further concessions be safely granted to them.

Sir, this appears to be the view which Parliament should take of the subject. It is highly desirable to come to a frank and open decision upon it; that being the most likely mode to produce quiet. Suspense only fosters discontent. The Roman Catholics cannot but be assured that the legislature has felt the strongest disposition to give the most full and deliberate consideration to their claims; they have been repeatedly entertained and discussed; every argument which ability and zeal could suggest have been offered in support of them.

Perseverance, however, is threatened. Can the Roman Catholics suppose that, upon a subject so vitally important to the best interests of the nation, the legislature will be teased into acquiescence by importunity? still less, that it will be overawed by menace? certainly not. It is only by a reference to the reason and conviction of Parliament that they have any prospect of success to their application. Satisfy Parliament that the boon can be granted with perfect safety to the Constitution in Church and State, and it will be granted nearly with unanimity, almost by acclamation.

But, Sir, the proof lies upon the Roman Catholics; and that proof must be clear. The nation will not be satisfied that their constitutional liberties should be risked upon speculative opinions and abstract refinements. The stake is too important to be ventured on a mere calculation of chances. Let the concessions proposed be stated with precision—the barriers and arrangements, which are to accompany them, be accurately set forth, and carefully examined, so as to assure us of perfect security. If that course is not pursued, where are we to stop? where can we make our stand with safety, but at the point at which we are already arrived? Without a change in the condition of the Roman Catholics, and without ample securities, should the Protestant circle round the throne be drawn still closer, we may, as that circle is diminishing, be carried on, even with accelerated velocity, towards a vortex, which would engulf in its abyss, the Protestant throne, the religious establishments, and the civil liberties of the nation.

SPEECH

OF

LESLIE FOSTER, ESQ.

M.P. FOR THE COUNTY OF LOUTH.

When the Roman Catholic Claims were brought forward in the House of Commons, February 28th, 1825, LESLIE FOSTER, Esq. M. P. for the County of Louth, in Ireland, addressed the House in the following perspicuous and Protestant diction.

SIR.—There appears to be an impression in the House, that no persons in Ireland but the society of Orangemen are hostile to the prayer of the present petition. This impression is most erroneous. There are many, very many individuals in that country never connected with that society, who are steadily opposed to the measure before the House. Of those numerous opponents, I, Sir, am one. But having made mention of that society, I shall take this opportunity of expressing my regret at its existence, and my anxiety to see it dissolved.* However, Sir, I must confess that I cannot see the motion of the honourable baronet (Burdett) so divested of all its dangers. All who have attended to the advocacy of this question of late years must perceive a very great change in the tone of its supporters. Formerly they declared that, the Irish Church Establishment should remain inviolate; that the concession of the Roman Catholic claims would bring no danger to it. But lately that tone has been altered; and now we hear of nothing but how unsuitable the Protestant Church is to the disposition of the Irish people, and how beneficial the abolition of it would prove to their most important interests. True, the honourable mover has not uttered these sentiments in the course of his speech, but other honourable members, on other occasions, have not placed themselves under similar restraint. Nay, there is a notice, at this moment pending,

* The Society of Orangemen has been since voluntarily dissolved.

of a motion on the state of the Protestant Church Establishment in Ireland.

But, Sir, what is a more important proof on this point is, the distinct and open avowal lately made by a Roman Catholic of high authority in their church, (Dr. Doyle,) that the more numerous the Protestant clergy were in Ireland, the more odious the Protestant religion became, and that that Establishment was altogether inconsistent with the peace and welfare of Ireland. It has been described by a member of the Catholic Association (Mr. Shiel) as a gorgeous nuisance; others of that body have honoured it with less measured condemnation, and have left their excited and prejudiced auditors to draw from it any practical conclusions they may be wild enough to adopt. But, there is a still higher document indicative of the hostile spirit felt against the Protestant Establishment of Ireland; a document proceeding from the opposite side of the House, (the Opposition,) and evidently prepared in anticipation of the present debate—I mean an article in the last “Edinburgh Review,” which has been put into my hands, and also into the hands of other honourable members. In that article the abolition of the Irish Protestant Church Establishment is laid down as the indispensable foundation-stone of the prosperity of Ireland.

Now, Sir, looking at this question in reference to the British Constitution, I have no hesitation to assert, that if the whole constitutional principles be kept in view, the modern doctrine of the abolition of our ecclesiastical institutions cannot hold its ground for a moment. If every sect of religion be admitted to an equal share in the government, the Protestant religion will cease to become what we have hitherto considered it—an essential portion of our glorious constitution; and, in a political point of view, will possess but a mere balance of preference over its various and numerous enemies, the sectaries of the day. The question of the particular religion of a government cannot, I think, be decided by an appeal to the unanimous consent of a people; for there is no religion from which persons will not be found to depart: it must be settled, either by an examination of its intrinsic

merits, or by the strong hand of power; and, on either of those grounds, I contend for the continued ascendancy of the Protestant Establishment. That establishment, I regret to say, has become a topic of discussion, of speculation, and censure; not among the Catholic Association alone, but in every village and cottage throughout Ireland. In short, an universal attempt has been made in that country to throw every sort of censure, and to excite every degree of odium against the Protestant ecclesiastical institutions.

I, Sir, am as unwilling as any man to ascribe to the clergy of that Establishment any imaginary virtues, or to cloak any real defects. I am ready to go as far as any rational man can go, towards the institution of salutary regulations; but when I hear the Protestant body of Ireland slandered and lowered in every social relation of life—when I hear them declared to be Orangemen in their politics, insignificant as capitalists; as landlords, but partial possessors of estates; and trifling as a population, I cannot but see danger in those calumnies, and I cannot let them pass unrefuted. The precise number of the Roman Catholic portion of the population of Ireland is not material to the merits of their petition: it is of no consequence to them whether they be a million more or a million fewer; but it is not so with the Protestants; a million makes a great difference in their case; for if the decrease of Protestants be so great as has been stated,—if Protestant pastors have indeed lost their flocks, then it is time for us to investigate the system of an establishment which could produce such effects; and it is for the purpose of imparting such an objectionable character to our Protestant Church Establishment, that so much ingenuity and labour have been used by the advocates of Roman Catholic emancipation—to press the numerical superiority of the Roman Catholic population on the attention of the Protestant people of England.

Now, Sir, this alleged excess can be best proved from statistical documents. Of the several ancient attempts to ascertain the population of Ireland, Sir William Petty has been admitted to be the most authentic; and he has stated the number of the Protestants to be 300,000, and that of the

Roman Catholics, 800,000. Now, taking that as the datum of successive calculations, we can come to a pretty certain calculation of their relative numbers at subsequent periods. The next census was not made until the time of the Independence of Ireland, when Lord Charlemont, in an address to the Volunteers said,—“ Never tell me that one million of Protestants can hold three millions of Catholics in subjection.”—Now Lord Charlemont was wrong in that statement; but, however, the statement, though partially erroneous in itself, borrowed importance from the character of the man who made it; for, on his authority, the Roman Catholics were not in his time more than three to one of the Protestants of Ireland. But Mr. Bushe, who assessed the population in 1788, found the entire population to consist of four millions and forty thousand, and the proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestants to be less than three to one; and this has been ever considered an authentic apportionment of the numbers of the two religions at that time. Since then, no census was taken until the year 1821, when the collective population was stated to be six millions eight hundred thousand souls; but the assumption that the intermediate accession consisted of Roman Catholics alone, has given rise to the erroneous, yet generally used phrase, of “six millions of Roman Catholics, and but one million of Protestants.” To these six millions, the honourable member for the Queen’s county has added an increase of one million since the year 1821; and that addition he attributes, by an additional error, to the body of Roman Catholics alone.

Now, Sir, I am morally certain, that the population of Ireland has not increased since the year 1821; it has rather received a corrective check, from that system of dispeopling estates, which has spread so much misery through the country—a system acted on by those landlords who, having discovered that brute cattle are more lucrative to them than crowds of idle human beings, have not scrupled to sweep thirty or forty families from their estates, and embody the former numerous divisions of their land into a few large farms. Famine has also checked the population; for, in my progress

through several parts of the kingdom, I have seen those wretched outcasts from their farms scattered into itinerant mendicancy through the country, or fixed in stationary poverty in the town, and suffering such extremes of misery as would, if detailed, harrow up the feelings of the House. The population was checked by the war also, and that in no trifling degree; so that I am safe in repeating, that it has advanced in a very trifling degree, within the last three years.

But, Sir, honourable members opposite have so often asserted this increase, and so often repeated the allegation contained in the Roman Catholic petitions, that I felt myself bound to look for documentary evidence on the subject; and I am happy to inform the House, that I have found it; but it is of a nature that will not be very palatable to gentlemen on the other side of the House. In Ulster, the population, according to the census of 1821, was 1,998,000, of whom 1,170,000 were Protestants. In Leinster, the population was 1,757,000, of whom 370,000 were Protestants. In Munster, the population was 1,935,000, of whom 200,000 were Protestants. In all Ireland there were 1,860,000 Protestants, and 4,900,000 Roman Catholics, and some odd numbers. This is nearly the same ratio as that which Sir William Petty stated it to be in his time.

It was asserted, Sir, that the Protestants of Ireland are almost all Presbyterians. I deny the assertion. The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland reckoned the number of Presbyterians at 560,000. I believe it, however, to be nearer to 620,000. To this number I will add 45,000 as the number of other dissenters from the Church, including Quakers, Anabaptists, Seceders, &c.; and there will thus be a total of 665,000 Protestant Dissenters from the church of Ireland. The whole number of Protestants in Ireland I have before shown to be 1,860,000; so that it is clear that a large majority of them are members of the Established Church. I have not made this comparison of numbers invidiously; but I think that I am fully justified in making it, after the manner in which the advocates of that side of this question which I espouse have been taunted

with the overwhelming numerical superiority of the Roman Catholics. I know that those who oppose me are aware of the accuracy of my statement; and I believe that they are the most unpalatable truths that have been offered for their consideration, during the whole of the stormy period of the last twenty years. I shall say no more on the point of numbers; but will proceed to another point, which I consider of considerable importance.

Some years ago, Sir, the House was asked, on the subject of Roman Catholic emancipation, "What are you afraid of?" You have an enemy on the throne of France, who is an enemy of all religion; you have a Pope so far divested of all power, as to be absolutely a prisoner; you have got rid of the bugbear which you once found in the Jesuits; you hear no more of the infallibility of general councils; you have, indeed, a Roman Catholic religion, but of a very different character from that by which it was formerly distinguished—of what, then, are you afraid?" The very mode in which this argument was put, showed that the parties who used it at that time thought that there might be just ground of alarm in a King of France who was a firm friend to the Roman Catholic creed; in a Pope who was firmly established in his chair; in the existence of the Jesuits as a religious body; and in the restoration of the Roman Catholic religion to all its old superstition.

Now, Sir, let the House consider how the case stands at present. The royal family of France cannot be taunted, even by their bitterest enemies, with being indifferent Roman Catholics. It has been said, that the head of it is casting an eye upon Ireland; if he be, it is an eye of religion, and not of politics. I firmly believe, that the granting an indemnity to the emigrants is the third, the upholding the principle of legitimacy the second, and the re-establishment of the Roman Catholic religion in all parts of the world where it has been once professed, is the first and leading passion of his mind. The chair of St. Peter is at present filled with a worthy successor of the Gregories and the Clements; and I really believe, that his equal has not been vested with the

tiara for many centuries. It is, however, known that he is exerting all the powers of his mind to regain the influence which formerly belonged to his station. The Jesuits are again established, not only abroad, but also at home; not merely in France and Spain, but also in England and Ireland. The Roman Catholic religion is again dealing its miracles and indulgences; and displaying a spirit of intolerance and persecution, which can only be equalled by that which it displayed in the seventeenth century. Now, when such is admitted to be the fact, I cannot see the consistency of the logic which called upon the House to make concessions which were questionable when there was no danger, under circumstances which the very advocates of emancipation admit to be full of danger.

But, Sir, overlooking this inconsistency, I will say that, even if the circumstances I have just mentioned did not exist, the present is not a time to concede anything to the Roman Catholics. The present is one of those epochs in which there is much religious excitement abroad, and in which religious zeal is even paramount to political ambition. This is proved by the numerous Bible Societies, Missionary Societies, and what not, which now exist in England; and by the proposition of a law of sacrilege in France, which one could easily suppose to have been enacted in the most intolerant period of the reign of Louis XIV. This law is the manifest progeny of religious zeal, and is so opposite to the spirit of the French nation, that if ever an attempt be made to act upon it, it will cause greater trouble to the dynasty of Bourbon than any which they have hitherto experienced. The present is, therefore, in my opinion, Sir, the very last moment when any change should be made at all affecting religious opinions. I am hostile to such change, because I see the Roman Catholics mixing up politics with their religion; and because I know, that the alliance between religion and politics is always dangerous.

Gentlemen formerly said to me, "You object to this change; but why?—do you think that things can ever revert to their old situation?" I will tell them, that I do not merely

think that they might revert to it, but I know that they have so reverted already. This single fact affords me matter for consideration, before I give up any of the principles of the British Constitution. I have always been led to consider the compact between Church and State to form one of those principles. To any measure, therefore, which tends to weaken this compact, I shall always oppose the most strenuous resistance, regardless of all the reproaches which may be heaped upon me for so doing, and leaving the consequences to the Supreme Disposer of all events.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD REDESDALE,

LATE LORD CHANCELLOR OF IRELAND.

On the order of the day, "For a Committee to take into consideration the Claims of the Roman Catholic Body," being read, April 21, 1812, and the Earl of Donoughmore having addressed the House of Lords, the Right Honourable and Learned LORD REDESDALE, late Lord Chancellor of Ireland, rose, and thus addressed their Lordships.

MY LORDS.—In the view which the noble mover has taken on this subject, and that entertained by myself, the principal difference is, that while the noble earl thinks that every restraint should be removed which affects the Roman Catholics, I, on the contrary, am of opinion, that those restraints and securities formed by the law should remain in force; nor am I disposed to regret the result of experience on the benefit derived from them.

The great objection, my lords, which is the foundation of every other, to the so-called Roman Catholic emancipation,

is the usurpation of temporal power by spiritual persons. It is this which first shook the foundation of Popish supremacy, and finally led to the Reformation, aided by co-operating causes. It is this subordination of civil to spiritual power, which I must always consider as the great and fundamental objection, considered with relation to the question. It must be remembered, that the Protestant religion is the establishment of the country, and that this should be supported and maintained, for the peace and quiet of the whole community. I can assure the noble earl, that I am not actuated by any species of that enmity to which he has alluded, or by any dislike to the Roman Catholics, as such, or bigoted attachment to the Protestants; I only consider the safety of the Constitution of the country, of which the Protestant Church forms a part.

When it was the policy of James II. to favour the ascendancy of the Roman Catholic Church, he wished to give to persons professing that religion places of trust under the crown. For what purpose, but to destroy the superiority of the Protestants? Had Roman Catholics been placed in such situations, would it not have been a breach of those laws which are deemed essential to the security of the Protestant Establishment? Then, until I am assured that securities equally firm are provided, I can never accede to a total removal of the disqualifications of which the Roman Catholics complain.

My Lords.—After the abdication of King James, the Prince of Orange was called to the throne of these realms by the Convention Act; and the Declaration of Rights enumerates a variety of acts, contrary to the laws of the realm, for a sovereign to perform. After the accession of King William and Queen Mary, this Declaration of Rights was converted into a statute. This act I shall quote, to show that it was held to be inconsistent with the safety of the kingdom, that the sovereign of those realms should profess the Roman Catholic religion, or marry a Roman Catholic, and that by so doing he would be excluded from the crown. It declares, “Whereas it hath been found, by experience,

that it is inconsistent with the safety and welfare of this Protestant kingdom to be governed by a *Popish prince*, or by any King or Queen marrying a Papist; the said Lords spiritual and temporal and Commons do further pray, that it may be enacted, that all and every person or persons, that is or are, or shall be reconciled to, or shall hold communication with the See or Church of Rome, or shall profess the Popish religion, or shall marry a Papist, shall be *excluded*, and be for ever incapable to inherit, possess, or enjoy, the crown and government of this realm and Ireland." The exclusion of the Roman Catholics from political power was acknowledged by James II. himself afterwards, with an express concession, that no Roman Catholic should sit in the Commons' House of Parliament; and the succession was at that time provided for in the Protestant line, excluding all branches which were not Protestants. It seems, however, my lords, that all those precautions and restrictions, which our ancestors deemed wise and just, are now to be considered as unjust.

Your lordships all know, that an oath was taken by the King at his Coronation, binding him to maintain the Protestant succession; and this oath was imposed on the Sovereign, to prevent him from committing any act which might endanger the Constitution. I shall read the words of that oath:—"I will, to the utmost of my power, maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the Gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law;—and I will preserve unto the Bishops and Clergy of this realm, and to the churches committed to their charge, all such rights and privileges as by law *do* or shall appertain to them, or any of them." All these precautions would be unnecessary, unless they were intended to impose on the conscience of the Sovereign an obligation not to consent to any act which he might deem injurious to the security of the Constitution, or the interests of the State.

My Lords.—The question, then, is simply this, whether the proposed act is likely to be injurious or not? And when I find that the guards which are now in existence to

protect the Constitution, have been found sufficient for the purpose during so long a period, I shall not be induced to depart from their security by any speculative notions or opinions. It is impossible to divest a religious sect of the character of a political party; in this view, not only the Roman Catholics, but those of the Established religion, and the Scots, which dissent from it, are to be considered as political parties.

The question, then, is, whether these political parties, distinct from the Establishment, are to be admitted into a share of political power, with safety to the State. In an absolute government, the prince, having the complete control over all the parties in the State, might admit any set of men into power, and he could as easily exclude them, if he saw any occasion for doing so; but in a government like this, such a mode of conduct is absolutely impossible.

If, my lords, the Roman Catholics were admitted to all the places of trust and power under the Crown, the consequence would be, the ascendancy of a hostile political party; for it is impossible to be a true Roman Catholic, without a hostile feeling towards Protestants. Men will be men—the desire of obtaining authority, power, and emolument, will naturally influence them; and, besides this, there is another influence likely to operate as strongly, namely, the belief that the Roman Catholic Church is the only true one.

That this unfortunate persuasion exists, there is the highest authority to prove; Mr. Locke and others have admitted, that the Roman Catholics deny salvation to any persons out of the pale of their church. The page of history shows the unfortunate conflicts which had existed in Ireland upon the subject of religion, and there have also been struggles in this country, which produced much bloodshed.

In early life, my lords, I conceived that some concessions might be safely granted to the Roman Catholics, and your lordships will do me the justice to say, that I have gone the length which I thought consistent with the safety of the State: but, further than that, my mind is not satisfied by any thing I have heard upon the subject, that it is right to proceed.

My Lords.—I have heard it urged, that we support the cause of Roman Catholics in Spain and Portugal; but I cannot see any force in that argument, for I have no objection to the Roman Catholic religion being exercised, if it does not tend to disturb the established order of things in this country. The existence of that religion is no injury, provided it does not interfere with the government and the constitution; and therefore there exists no reason against the alliance of this country with Spain and Portugal. Besides, the tone of the Roman Catholics now, is very different from what it had been at the commencement of the concessions to them, which were received in the spirit of amity and good-will; but the moment they gained a standing-place, they assumed the language of menace and intimidation.

As to various publications extensively circulated by the Roman Catholics, I maintain, they are in general full of falsehoods and misrepresentations, and I cannot but censure the disposition manifested to rake up those half-buried writings, which formerly tended to inflame the passions of the people. Among others, I allude particularly to a work, entitled, “Ward’s Errata of the Protestant Bible,” a work decidedly suited to that noxious purpose.

You are told, my lords, that the way to prevent the separation of the two kingdoms (so much to be dreaded) is to grant the boon demanded by the Roman Catholics: but could that prevent it? Is it by increasing the political power of a body who have shown themselves disposed to agitate the country? Would they, by increasing the means, diminish the disposition? On the contrary, I think they would greatly increase it, and that a concession on that ground would be as unwise in the consequences which were likely to ensue from it, as the conduct of the Saxons was in buying off the Danes as often as they invaded their territories.

It has been suggested by the royal Duke, (Sussex) that as every guard and security are provided, it is therefore proper to go into a committee. But there is no ground for suppos-

ing this, for nothing less than unconditional concession will satisfy the Roman Catholics, and this they have declared on various occasions, in the most positive terms.

My Lords.—It is not a little singular, that those who will not make the slightest concession on their part, desire to be put in possession of situations which would give them the patronage of the Protestant Church. They desire to be raised to places of trust under the Crown, and yet will not grant the Crown the most contracted negative. Do they not condemn themselves by refusing to concede the Veto? Do they not declare, by the refusal, that they would not place the highest dignitaries of the church from under a foreign control, hostile to this country? And do they, notwithstanding, demand an admission to power which would give them a control over the Protestant Church? I maintain that it will answer no good purpose to go into a committee; for, if the object of such a measure is to conciliate the Roman Catholics, it would not be effected by any thing short of entire and absolute concession: and, for the truth of this assertion, I need only refer your lordships to the resolutions passed at Galway, at a meeting where Lord French presided, which resolutions pledged the Roman Catholics not to vote for any candidate who would not support the entire concession of the Roman Catholic claims.

For what purpose, then, would your lordships go into a committee? What have you to consider there? What to debate upon? The simple and naked question is, whether you are prepared to give all they ask, for less than all will not satisfy them? If this were done, I could not but see great insecurity in it; for, if there exists a religious sect, bound by implicit obedience to their priests, that obedience does not leave them free agents. How is it possible that a set of persons, holding together in such a manner, and possessed of the power they aspire to, should not greatly influence the government of the country? Is it likely that the Roman Catholic clergy would be satisfied without their share of the emoluments of the Church; and, if so, would not

the Establishment follow? If, then, you are prepared to vote for the motion, you must be prepared to abandon that Establishment. Nay, you would be bound to do so.

In the year 1793, the late Lord Clare prophetically said, that if the legislature yielded one point, they should go on step by step, until they conceded the whole: for that nothing short of that would satisfy the Roman Catholics. For these reasons, and under the impression that entire concession is dangerous to the Establishment, I feel it my duty to resist the motion.

SPEECH

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD STOWELL.

When Mr. Grattan moved, in the House of Commons, that the House should resolve itself into a Committee, to take into consideration the Claims of the Roman Catholics, on February 25th, 1813, and the Debate being adjourned to March 2d, 1813, the Right Honourable LORD STOWELL, (then SIR WILLIAM SCOTT,) Judge of the High Court of Admiralty, delivered the following eloquent, perspicuous, and truly Protestant oration.

SIR.—It is always with great reluctance, and not unfrequently with some degree of personal pain, that I obtrude myself upon the notice of the House; but the importance of the present question, and the connexion which I have with those who have expressed a strong feeling about the decision of it, induce me to hope that the House will think me entitled to claim some portion of their attention.

If I could agree, Sir, in opinion with a right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Plunkett) who distinguished himself by a speech, not more to be admired as an exhibition of talents, than for the honourable and manly candour by which it was still further dignified and adorned, that there is no dan-

ger in relaxing the present restraints, I should likewise agree that they ought immediately to be relaxed; for I am very ready to admit, that eligibility to public offices and seats in the legislature, (call it a right, or a pretension, or what you please,) ought not to be abridged without necessity; and when I say necessity, I mean a grave necessity, arising from apprehensions of danger, not chimerical and visionary apprehensions, but such as may affect men of firm and constant minds, of danger to some interests of the State, which are deservedly held dear and important. And when I describe the interests of the Church of England and Ireland to be of that species of magnitude, I presume I express, with very few exceptions, the universal sense and feeling of this House.

But, Sir, I cannot agree to this position of fact, that there is no rational apprehension of any danger, direct or indirect, to the Established Church, from any relaxation of these restraints. I do not mean to say that the admission of Roman Catholics to some of the offices, from which they are at present excluded by law, does not furnish a reasonable ground of apprehension; and that some of those offices into which they must not intrude, are offices to which their ambition might safely enough be allowed to aspire. But then, Sir, I say, first, that if any man has such offices in his view, with an intention of offering fair relief, so far as such offices are concerned, he ought to bring them forward, not as an appointment of a committee for general undefined grievances, but in particular bills in which they shall be submitted to fair, and distinct, and specific consideration; and I say further, that no admission can, with any degree of safety to the interests I have described, be given to offices which are either judicial, with a jurisdiction extending to ecclesiastical questions, or to such as convey to the person who holds them a great portion of political power. For these are the two principles, within the range of which I conceive the danger, and the necessity of providing against it, to be bounded.

The office of common law, for instance, is one from which a Roman Catholic ought to be excluded. And why? Because a person in that situation has to decide most important

questions, of rights, of advowsons, of presentations, of tithes, offerings, moduses, church rates, and a thousand others; and I would ask that honourable gentleman, whether if he had a son or a brother in the church, he would, with his experience of mankind, think that his son or brother would confidently trust a Roman Catholic judge, sitting to decide many of such questions between the Protestant clergyman and the Roman Catholic parishioners: and whether there would not be that distrust and suspicion of an improper bias, which might disturb the fair course of justice, even if that suspicion and distrust were not in itself an evil, which it is the duty of prudent institutions entirely to remove, by removing their natural causes. So with respect to the office of privy counsellor, who has to advise the Sovereign in matters of religion, which are then matters of State, in some degree, though in a still higher degree, matters of conscience. All the same objections apply to the office of chancellor, in a much higher degree, and with the addition of his being the constitutional guardian of the royal conscience in affairs of this nature, as well as in those of a merely civil description.

With respect to political power, Sir, I am not afraid to avow, that it appears unsafe to delegate to Roman Catholic hands, a large portion of PROTESTANT POWER; for by the constitution of this country, as settled upon its present basis, political power is Protestant power. Sir, I cannot contemplate the admission of Roman Catholic members into the senate, where they will have to decide upon questions directly affecting the religion of the State, without some degree of uneasiness. Indeed the right honourable member seemed to admit the existence of some danger, by the antidote which he held out; for his reasoning was, what could one hundred members do against the body of the House? thereby appearing to admit that danger would be introduced, but that it would be disarmed by the inferiority of their numbers; that the safety was to be found, not in their dispositions, but in their minority; that a certain degree of mischief would be infused, but that it would be diluted and rendered harmless

by the prevalence of the sounder particles, which form the general substance of the mass.

Sir, I am not quite clear that the right honourable member's arithmetic would eventually turn out to be correct. He will please to remember, that if Irish Roman Catholic gentlemen are admitted, English Roman Catholic gentlemen cannot be excluded. Many of these are of ancient honourable families, and possessing great hereditary influence in the counties and boroughs where they reside. And if to these two descriptions of persons, you add those who may bring into this House the opinion, much too fashionable in the world, that legislation has nothing to do with religion, and that the State has no right whatever to interpose at all, in the intercourse between the Creator and the convenience of man, I cannot think that the danger of the Church is altogether so chimerical as has been represented, or that the clergy are justly liable to the free observations which have been made upon them, for the anxiety they have ventured to express. Sir, I cannot avoid saying, that it is one of the most alarming signs of the times, that that venerable body has been, on this occasion, treated with a rudeness and disrespect which I am confident they have never before experienced within these walls.

That there should not be, Sir, in Roman Catholic minds, a spirit, which I am loth to call a spirit of hostility, but wish rather to describe as unfriendly to our Protestant Establishment, it is impossible to conceive. Such a spirit is unavoidably produced by the fundamental principles of their faith, and the more sincere a man is in the entertainment of those principles, the more sincere must be his disinclination to the maintenance of those establishments. A man of common benevolence, really attached to the importance of that religion, must wish it to become the favoured religion of his country. He would act in contradiction, not only to his own theory, but to his own natural feelings, if he did not. Sir, those feelings have been expressed with but little reserve. I find a worthy baronet of great authority in that profession

of faith, though by some represented as no friend to the higher claims of that Church, expressing himself thus in a published pamphlet. "I shall expect, very seriously expect, when the subject has been more matured, to hear that the Irish Bishops of the Establishment, having since made over a portion of their revenues for the decent maintenance of their Roman Catholic brethren, are ready to make further proposals, and to agree to an alternate enjoyment, subject always to his Majesty's choice, of dignities and emoluments." Is this no language of hostility to the present establishments of the country? If such views and expectations are now avowed, what are we to look for when they are advanced further to the consummation of their wishes? If these things are done in the green leaf, what will be done in the dry?

I cannot but think, Sir, that sentiments of this unfriendly kind are most heartily entertained in Ireland; and for this reason, that the Roman Catholic religion is more truly Catholic in that country than in any Roman Catholic country; and this, again, for an obvious reason. In most Roman Catholic countries, the doctrines of the Church of Rome come softened and ameliorated, through the strainers, if I may so call them, of the civil government. The civil government is a sort of middle term; and the people, having a confidence in the religion of their government, which is in communion with the Church of Rome, range themselves on the side of their civil government, whenever it comes into hostilities with the Pontiff. Before the Reformation, this country did so, universally, in the same conflicts, which led to the statutes of provisoes, præmunires, and others of that kind. So in France, the liberties of the Gallican Church against the Pope, have always been popular in that country.

But, Sir, in Ireland there is no such middle term. The Pope is the direct head of the Irish Roman Catholic church; in close and immediate contact with it, without any communication through the State, which, being Protestant, has none of the confidence of the people in any transactions it may have with the Pope. They regard, with extreme jealousy, every attempt of their civil government to oppose his autho-

rity. His dogmas, therefore, naturally direct the opinion of the Roman Catholic church in Ireland, in a much more unqualified way than those of other national churches. The question then comes, what are the opinions of the Pontiff upon this matter of the Protestant Establishment?

Sir, upon this point I shall not travel back to ancient, and, as they are represented, antiquated authorities; I will use no other than the declarations of the present Pope, declared in the most solemn manner, and upon the most serious occasions, within these four or five years. I find, in the interesting Account given of the transactions of the Pope, under the usurpations of Buonaparte, declarations of the Pope given in pastoral instruction to this effect: "The system of indifferentism, which does not in truth, suppose any religion, is that which is most injurious and opposite to the Roman Catholic religion, which, because it is divine, *is necessarily sole and unique; and for that reason cannot make an alliance with any other, just as Christ cannot ally himself with Belial, light with darkness, truth with error, or true piety with impiety.*"—Pastoral Instructor, 22d May, 1808. So again—"We regret that all religions should be free, and publicly exercised, as contrary to the canons and councils of the Roman Catholic religion, the tranquillity of life, and the good of the State."—Page 45. So again—"The protection much boasted of for different worships, is only a pretext and a colour to authorize the secular power to meddle in things spiritual; since in showing respect for all sects, with all their opinions, customs, and superstitions, a government does not respect, in effect, any right, any institution, any law of the Roman Catholic Church. Under such protection, is concealed a persecution, the most crafty and dangerous which can be exercised against the religion of Jesus Christ. He does not love or understand our most holy religion, out of which there is no hope of salvation, who does not revolt at such an order of things." These are the opinions of the Supreme Head of the Roman Catholic Church, upon the mere toleration of other worships. If so, what must be his opinion of a state of things; in which,

another worship is dominant, and the Roman Catholic faith is in a state of depression? Do I misrepresent the opinion when I say it can be no other than this: that such a state is an inverted and unnatural state, which cannot continue without endangering the salvation of the country where it exists.

Is there any reason to suppose that the Roman Catholic church in Ireland dissents from the opinions of the See of Rome, upon a subject so interesting to their common feelings? I am sure, Sir, I do not misrepresent the prelates of that church, when I describe them to be faithful disciples and votaries of that See, and most conscientious in their adherence to its tenets;—and most singular it would be, if they deserted it, upon a point which is so immediately connected with their own personal interests of every species. It is quite impossible, that they, of all men, should be better satisfied than the Pope himself is with the Protestant ascendancy, and with the comparative depression of their own church, where they live!

But, Sir, it is intimated that the Roman Catholic laity hold no such opinions. In the first place, I look in vain for the evidence of that fact. In the second place, there may be some more philosophical spirits, who entertain other opinions, but who are charged, in the suspicions of their brethren, with departing from the strict rules of faith; and whose general opinions, upon these matters, I must say, I have always found extremely difficult to reconcile with the superficial notions of that faith, which I have been able to collect from any exposition of them: but, however that may be, I have not a doubt that the number of such persons is comparatively small, and that the general body of the faithful would follow their pastors upon such subjects. It is a remark of that profound observer, who has been styled the chancellor of human nature, Lord Clarendon, that any agreement which you may make with that class of men, will signify little, unless it is followed by the approbation of their clergy.

Sir, in this state of opinions, I cannot but think there is great hazard in arming such persons with the authority be-

longing to many of the situations, from which they are now excluded. Their opinions unavoidably exclude them. It is a very simple, and, I should have thought, a very inoffensive proposition:—"We cannot invest you with power which, we think, will be employed injuriously to the interests we hold dear and sacred, but which you hold mischievous and intolerable. We lament the necessity, but we are compelled to act upon the common principle of self-preservation. We are sorry to exclude persons, whose talents might be otherwise useful, and whose ambition, on their part, is fair; but whose talents and ambition would be fatal to our favourite establishments, and this without any crime on their part; without any other conduct, than such as would be directed by their own moral and religious conscience."

It is a fallacy, Sir, which runs through the whole of this discipline, that we are imputing crime or imposing punishment: neither the one nor the other. The measure we take is not one of crimiating penalties; it is a mere measure of self-defence, against opinions and inclinations, which we do not presume to censure, because they do not proceed from any depravation of mind; but which we must guard against, because they import danger to interests which we cannot suffer to be disturbed.

It is no more, Sir, than a defensive precaution, which I am equally inclined to allow to Roman Catholics, against Protestants, for the protection of their religion. It always appeared to me, that the appointment of MR. NECKAR, under the royal government of France, was as impolitic as it was unconstitutional; that it weakened the frame of that government, and tended, amongst many other causes, to produce those calamities which have since spread themselves over every part of civilized Europe.

It appeared to me, Sir, that the right honourable gentleman answered his own question,—where was the danger directly or indirectly, when he admitted, as he did, most candidly and explicitly, that he must insist upon securities; and that, without securities, he was disposed to resist the application: for, if no danger, nor reasonable apprehension of danger,

why call for securities? He likewise appeared to me to admit that the security of the present oath was not sufficient, for if it was, why call for further securities? for every unnecessary security required is a mere tyrannical imposition. Nothing could be more correct than his opinion, that the security offered by the oath was insufficient; not upon the ground that oaths will not bind Roman Catholic consciences, (I make no such observation,) but because the oath cannot be construed so as to meet the apprehended danger. It cannot be so interpreted, with any fairness, so as to bind them to the defence of the Established Church; if they think it inexpedient and sinful, and are called upon, for instance, as senators, to pass legislative opinion upon any question relating to it. The oath abjures any intention to subvert the Protestant religion at the time of taking it. The utmost effect which can be given to that is, that it abjures all direct purpose, all plan, or project, at the time. But would he not be fully as much at liberty to vote, according to his own conscience, on such questions, as any other member of the House? Would he be guilty of perjury in the opinion of any then breathing, if he should vote honestly for the abolition of Protestant episcopacy, when such a question was brought before him, and his own conscientious opinion directed the vote he gave.

I take this to be, Sir, as independent a member, in spite of his oath, as any other member of the House. If so, you leave him, in spite of the oath, to the operation of every principle and prejudice which has taken possession of his mind. And, in that state of things, what are you to expect but a Roman Catholic vote upon a Protestant subject? Remember the memorable declaration of the EARL OF BRISTOL, in the House of Lords, upon the passing of the Test Act;—"Upon the whole matter, my lords, however the sentiments of a Catholic of the Church of Rome, may oblige me, upon scruple of conscience, in some particulars of this bill, to give my negative to it, when it comes to a passing; yet as a member of a Protestant Parliament, my advice cannot but go along with the main scope of it."—Here is the

natural working of the religious conscience of the Roman Catholic, against the prudential and political conscience. The measure proclaimed to be right and fit, but the vote directed against it, because it tended to the safety of the Protestant Establishments of the country; which, as a disciple of the Church of Rome, he was bound religiously to discountenance.

What, Sir, are the securities proposed? First, the Veto; and second, the domestic nomination of prelates. The Veto, after an apparent acceptance, has been rejected with abhorrence; and the domestic nomination with increased abhorrence. I remember incurring some degree of ridicule in this House,—some years ago, for intimating that such would be its fate; for it always appeared to me more objectionable, if it is possible to extract any knowledge of Roman Catholic principles, from the ordinary sources of general information upon such subjects. It is certainly a greater violence to those principles to discard the Pope entirely, and to create an independent church, internally governed without him, than to admit his authority, controlled by some interference on the part of the civil Sovereign. Take away the Pope, and you take away all the spiritual authority, which is merely derivative from him.—No bishops,—no priests,—no valid administration of sacraments. For all these offices and functions are emanations of that spiritual authority, which resides plenarily and fundamentally, in him. To be sure, the last Concordat with Buonaparte seems to imply some surrender of this sacred supremacy, for it expressly provides,—“that if the Pope does not confer the investiture within a certain time, the metropolitan shall do it.” This amounts to little less than an abdication of the Papacy, and only proves that the spirit and firmness of that venerable person (for I wish to speak of him without disrespect,) have at last sunk under his necessity and distresses. However this may be, both these professed securities were rejected by the Irish Roman Catholic church, with horror, as contaminating the ark of God.

When I hear it said, Sir, (as I hear it repeatedly said,) that these are the intemperate expressions of violent men,

I look about in vain for any grave and public disclaimer of them,—they appear to express the universal sentiment—no public body disclaims them—no body protests against them. There is a profound silence on the other side, if any such side exists. If other sentiments are felt, why are they not expressed? Why compel us to presume an unanimity in the opinion so vociferously proclaimed, that, to require the securities, is insult, and injury, and persecution?

These particular securities, Sir, being out of the question, (supposing that their sufficiency was admitted,) what others are proposed? I hear of none, and therefore am compelled to conclude, that if the thing is to take place, it must take place without any securities at all. It has been admitted by almost every gentleman, that, without reference to any other consideration, foreign influence, which is to be watched at all times, is to be guarded against; peculiarly, when the Pope is liable to be considered either as the captive or as the *protégé* of Buonaparte; or, indeed, as in different respects both; for he is his captive, as chained to a residence in France—*‘liber non est qui non potest ire quo vult;’* and yet he has been re-invested with some authority, some revenue, and is assured of particular protection, for the numerous wants of the church. It is impossible not to see that the Pontiff’s power is Buonaparte’s power; that his concordat will be Buonaparte’s concordat; in short, that he is not in a treatable condition. But if even that were not the case, there still remains the radical objection of a conscientious hostility to Protestant establishments. It is said, that no such apprehensions are entertained by other Protestant states. But they are no authorities upon the point.

For, Sir, first the Protestant religion is not deeply incorporated in their civil constitutions, if civil constitutions they have; most of them being despotic states, in which the prince has a ready corrective in his own hands, for any inconvenience which may be apprehended. In the next place, the Roman Catholics do not bear the same formidable proportion of numbers. Here is a great country, the population of which, is described to be generally Roman Catholic; at any rate the Protestants are in a minority. If, to the ad-

vantage of such superior number, growing, as they have been described, in knowledge and in wealth, you add an equal access of power, how long will the equality subsist? Is it in nature that it should not be overthrown? You can meet the advantage of numbers, only by the advantage of the possession of power—by making the few govern the many, the actual footing on which all governments exist, whatever be the theory on which they are founded. But if the majority (so qualified) have power, in conjunction with numbers, it is very easy to foresee how the minority will be disposed of.

It is said, that all this assumes a principle of hostility, in Roman Catholic minds, to Protestant establishments. Sir, if I could readily conceive the case of two great religious parties, equally and peaceably dividing the power of a great State, or engaging in struggles for it, with a total oblivion of their religious difference, I should be inclined to admit, that no mischief might possibly follow. But I fear that that state of things is reserved for the times when the leopard is to lie down with the lamb. Are we entitled to expect that state of things from the past experience of that country? Is there a country in which religious zeal has made more intemperate and more persevering struggles for the possession of power? Would these struggles be less violent, and less persevering when they advanced more to a footing of equality, when the party, which complained of depression, had advanced nearer to the completion of their wishes? Look at the experience of other countries. What was the result of the treaty of Oliva, in Poland? What was the result of the edict of Nantes, in France, celebrated as a master piece of pacific policy? And both founded on principles of distribution of power. Did not parties become more envenomed, struggles more acrimonious, till allayed, at last, by a return (though carried to most inordinate lengths) to that policy, which the practice of most nations has been content to adopt, of giving a decided ascendant to that religion, which it approves; and keeping its opponents, not in a degraded condition, but in that disarmed state, as to the possession of power, which is indispensably requisite for the preservation of that ascendancy. My

humble, but confident opinion is, that the measure proposed, instead of being a measure of peace, will only sound the trumpet of religious and civil animosity.

Sir, what is the measure proposed to us by the right honourable gentleman, as the result of the really profound wisdom which he has applied to the consideration of the subject? That we should pass an act including the securities which we think necessary to obtain; such act to be suspended in execution till the Roman Catholics shall be content to give those securities. I cannot help thinking this mode of legislating *de bene esse*, is very novel, and very inconvenient. It may be a totally nugatory exercise of our legislative powers; and, if we can trust strong declarations, will certainly be so. If it should so turn out, it will certainly be no very dignified nor useful exercise of those powers. But if there is no reason to hope that good will be done, is there no reason to fear that much mischief will be done? It can be no secret, that there are very large portions of the community in both countries, who regard the attempt with the most painful anxiety, and who deprecate such concessions to the Roman Catholics. And these persons, Sir, are not rabble; they are not uninformed persons, without character or weight in the community. They compose some of its most serious, and considerate, and respectable classes. In this condition of things, all that will be achieved, will be so much positive evil, without any counterbalance of good. Here will be an idle parade of legislative benevolence, producing nothing but extreme uneasiness, and dissatisfaction among the Protestants, and increased ferment and resentment, amongst the Roman Catholics. For, if such proposals are regarded as insults and persecutions, I do not see how they are much recommended to the affections of the Roman Catholics, by merely being put into the black-letter of an act of Parliament. It really never occurred to me that an insult would be at all lessened in their feelings of it, for being offered to them by the legislature of their country.

On such grounds as these, Sir, (omitting many others in

the exhausted state of the question, and in my own exhausted state,) I shall certainly vote against going into a committee. If there are particular grievances, apply the remedy to each case, fairly and distinctly considered; but do not open a wholesale shop of grievances. I have no doubt that such a shop would be plentifully fed, for the remainder of the session, with fresh importations from the Roman Catholic Board at Dublin, which, as far as I can judge from two volumes I have perused, is a very well-stocked depôt for such articles. But do not let the legislature let loose the angry passions of men, upon subjects most likely to excite in times of difficulty and danger; for such I conceive the times still to be, though otherwise described by the right honourable gentleman. The modern Hannibal, or, rather Attila, still lives. We have scotched the snake, not killed it. We have to oppose, by every means, which human prudence can suggest, the most subtle and bloody tyrant which has ever infested the earth. Let us not waste away any portion of our strength in aggravated contentions amongst ourselves.

I cannot sit down, Sir, without expressing a regret, that I have yet heard nothing of the plans which we had reason to expect, from two honourable friends of mine, the noble Secretary of State (Lord Castlereagh,) who sits near me, and my right honourable friend (Mr. Canning,) below. I must do the eloquent mover (Grattan) the justice to acknowledge that he fairly stated his plan, though I cannot agree with him in thinking it satisfactory. That plan was to embody, in his act for the Roman Catholics, a declaration couched in the strongest terms, of the firm and eternal establishment of the National Church.

We all remember, Sir, the effect of declaratory acts in the case of America—a right maintained in words, given up in facts, and never afterwards recovered. I think it but a feeble security, and if I rightly interpret the right honourable gentleman, to whose speeches I have had frequent occasion to advert, his expectations were not satisfied with it, for he was looking out for further securities. However, I must do justice, at least, to the candour and

frankness of the original mover. I regret that I cannot pay the same compliment to my honourable friends, from both of whom, and particularly from my right honourable friend (Mr. Canning,) who obtained the resolution of Parliament, last year, some elucidation of their further views which might naturally have been expected, at the beginning of this debate. At present, they drive us, darkling, into this committee, for surely it is no better, to reserve their plans till a very late hour,—when no man worketh,—when it is impossible to devote any faculty of a fatigued mind, to a fair consideration of them. I hope they will immediately recollect this; in the mean time, I have only to add, that my decided vote is against going into the proposed committee.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE LORD VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH.

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When Lord Grenville “ moved the order of the day for taking into consideration the Roman Catholic Petition,” in the House of Lords, May 10th, 1805, the Right Honourable LORD VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH, then President of the Council, addressed the House, in the following nervous and Constitutional diction.

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MY LORDS.—I feel equally inclined to follow the example of the noble baron (Grenville,) and to discuss the important question which is before your lordships, with the temper and moderation that is necessary in considering it. Whatever sentiments I entertain respecting it, I will avow them plainly and frankly, and I will begin by saying, that though I would go as far in whatever regards toleration as any of your lordships, I am not prepared to go to the extreme extent proposed by the noble baron. I have listened to what fell from the noble baron with all the attention and respect that is due

to whatever comes from him; I have heard him with the pleasure that I always do, but it was a pleasure mingled with astonishment and surprise. When I recollect how greatly that noble baron distinguished himself in combating doctrines which led to all the calamities under which a great portion of the people is actually suffering, and I fear will long suffer, it was not without excessive astonishment that I have heard him this night maintain doctrines, the direct tendency of which is the introduction of all those innovating principles against which he had so manfully and successfully struggled.

Before I enter upon the question, my lords, I will take the opportunity of declaring, that I entirely concur with my noble friend the Secretary of State (Lord Hawkesbury,) in giving full credit to the Roman Catholics for their loyalty and attachment, both to the Constitution and the beneficent Sovereign at the head of it. I believe their intentions to be upright and sincere; but it is idle and vain to take the sentiments of the great body of the Roman Catholics from a few individuals, who can only answer for themselves. They might fairly and honestly, and with the best intentions in the world, pursue a line of conduct that might ultimately be attended with the most calamitous consequences to the country. I will not, therefore, place them in a situation, where their conduct, though perfectly well intended on their part, might be productive of such baneful effects.

To any lengths of toleration, my lords, no man can be more willing to go than I am; but the great object of the petition is to procure what is called Roman Catholic emancipation. That term, however, is improperly applied. There is no slavery here from which they are to be delivered. They have already been relieved from every thing that had any appearance of this nature. The granting of the prayer of the present petition will not satisfy them. This would only interest the mass of the people so far as might serve to pave the way for further concessions, in which they conceive themselves more immediately concerned. The effect, therefore, of yielding to the claims now made, would be nothing else

than exciting an expectation of obtaining more. The noble baron (Grenville) complained of the policy of our ancestors, which has been relaxed within the last twenty years; and he now complains of the rigour and impolicy of Parliament, which continues the restrictions that still remain, though these are the most important. But the history of the country clearly shows that the measures adopted by our ancestors, though rigorous and revolting in themselves, were detailed and justified by the soundest policy, and the most absolute necessity.

There is no instance, my lords, in the history of the country, of the Protestants and Papists agreeing in Parliament, and conducting business of government and legislation cordially together. Under the reign of Queen Mary, who adopted such sanguinary measures, the Popish interests gained the ascendancy in spite of the efforts of the Protestants. The Priests threatened those with excommunication who would not give their votes in favour of the Popish candidates, and by those and other means the Queen procured a Parliament, that seconded her endeavours to establish Popery in this country. Under the reign of Elizabeth the massacre of St. Bartholomew took place. A conspiracy occurred in Ireland, that ended in the removal of the Marquis of Ormsby, and left the melancholy proof that many members of Parliament were engaged in promoting the rebellion; and no less than forty-one members were expelled on that account, principally from the House of Lords. In the reign of Charles II. the royal word was given, that no attempt should be made to establish Popery; but the word was broken, and the high offices of the State were filled with Papists; and when the Duke of York afterwards succeeded, an avowed Roman Catholic, matters were carried so far, that the family lost the noblest possession that any family could possibly enjoy.

After such experience as this, my lords, of the temper and spirit of the Roman Catholics, were not our ancestors justified in the precautions which they adopted against the recurrence of similar scenes? Under the reign of King Wil-

liam, that great friend to the liberties of Europe, as well as of this country, these measures were first adopted. After these measures of rigour took place, an interval of calm and tranquillity succeeded in Ireland, which had before been almost constantly in a state of agitation, and continued even when rebellion arose in this country. The subsequent orderly conduct of the Irish led to relaxation of those laws, under the present reign, as had been correctly stated by the noble lord. I am satisfied that this was a wise policy, as I am disposed to grant every thing to the Roman Catholics, except political power.

Under the Constitution, my lords, as it stands at present, I will ask, what are the inconveniences felt by the Roman Catholics? Are they not as fully protected in their properties, their characters, their liberty, as any other description of his Majesty's subjects? I call upon any friend of the Roman Catholics to point out a single statute in our legislative code which bears hard upon the Roman Catholics. I am persuaded, if any such do exist, that it is only necessary to point it out, to induce its repeal.

If I thought, my lords, the effect of conceding the substance of the petition would be to unite the mass of the population of Ireland, perhaps I may not have been disposed to oppose it so decidedly as I find myself under the necessity of doing; but when I see the Roman Catholics almost undisguisedly endeavouring not to make themselves a part of the State, but the State itself; that is an object which I can never be induced to grant them. It is not merely a civil right, but political power, in the most comprehensive signification of the term, which they seek to attain. One consequence of acceding to what they demand in their petition would be, that their clergy would acquire an authority which they, with the peculiar tenets of their religion, and the facilities it affords, it is much to be feared, would convert to a dangerous use. I call upon the House to think of two such dangerous powers, as those of excommunication and auricular confession, and then to say, whether it would open a door to all the dangers

that might accrue to the National Church from the employment of such engines.

The Roman Catholic clergy, my lords, there is too much reason to apprehend, have never relinquished the hope of becoming the hierarchy of the country. I have the authority of Lord Clare for declaring, that there exist consistorial courts in every diocese in Ireland, and that there is a person residing at Rome charged to watch over the interests of the Irish Roman Catholic Church. Nay, more, there is not a dignity in the Established Church, which has not its counterpart in the Roman Catholic Church.

The ostensible object, my lords, and perhaps the real object of the petitioners, is plain enough; but is that object the object of the great body of Roman Catholics in Ireland? Will not that body be inclined to extend their views a little further? Will they not naturally look to the exaltation of their clergy, and to divers other privileges, which cannot be granted to them without imminent danger to the present Constitution in Church and State? If the House should manifest a disposition to concede to them even the limited object they demand, it cannot be done without the certain sacrifice of the Act of Settlement. What, my lords, I will ask, would be the consequences at an election in Ireland, if the Roman Catholics should be allowed to become members of the legislative body? In this country we have seen the tumult and inconveniences produced by the attachment of a certain description of the people to an individual. Whatever they were, they would be infinitely aggravated in that country, where numbers would be found contending with property.

My Lords.—I cannot bring myself to concede what is required by the petition. It seems to me a monstrous and shocking proposition to be called to place the Roman Catholics in a different state from the rest of his Majesty's subjects, owing only a limited allegiance. I call upon the House to preserve their Protestant King and their Protestant Parliament, and to recollect that it was a Protestant Parliament which rescued the nation from the dangers of a Popish

King. I exhort your lordships to follow the example of our Protestant deliverer; and to resolve to die in the last ditch of the Constitution, both in Church and State, rather than abandon one principle of either. There are two roads before your lordships; one of them is that old, venerable, and well-known way, which had been struck out for us by our ancestors; in pursuing that, we can encounter no dangers. The other is a way untrodden and dangerous, leading to innovations, the consequences of which no human foresight can reach. I am not prepared, my lords, to rush heedlessly into a path leading to such desperate results, and will consequently oppose the motion for referring the petition to a committee.

SPEECH

OF

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE EARL OF MANSFIELD.

When the order of the day for the second reading of the Roman Catholic Disability Removal Bill was read in the House of Lords, April 16, 1821, the Right Honourable and Noble EARL OF MANSFIELD addressed the House in the following eloquent and Constitutional language.

MY LORDS.—I feel it to be my duty to express, as concisely as the nature of the subject will permit, my sentiments on the bill before your lordships,—sentiments which have been formed on mature reflection, and which a pretty long residence in Roman Catholic countries has tended to confirm. The present bill consists of two parts—the first, to render all offices in the State open to the Roman Catholics; the second, to regulate their intercourse with the See of Rome. To the latter, many Roman Catholics strongly object; but it is to the former part of the bill, to the principle of removing the disabilities from the Roman Catholics, that my objection shall

be directed; and I will begin by moving, "That the bill should be read a second time this day six months."

This bill, my lords, appears to give up what is necessary to be retained for the security of the Protestant Church, without satisfying the Roman Catholics. It alarms those who are attached to the Established Church, while it sets no limits to the demands of the Roman Catholics. For, if any one supposes that the Roman Catholics will ever be satisfied without having their laity admitted to all offices, without exception or restriction, and without obtaining for their clergy the restoration of all benefices and property of the Church, and a recognition, in principle at least, of the right of that family to reign in this country which had been set aside by the Bill of Rights, he is much deceived.

I will venture to say, my lords, that those who expect the Roman Catholics will be content with less than this, show little foresight, little knowledge of mankind in general, and of the Roman Catholics in particular. I conceive that some contemplate such an arrangement when they support the present measure; and entertain the opinion, that as the Presbyterian Church is suffered to be the Established Church of Scotland, in the same way the Roman Catholic Church might be allowed to become the Established Church of Ireland. Much as I differ from those who are of this way of thinking, I must declare that even this would be less dangerous than the measure now before the House, which graduates them towards the object of their wishes, and gives them political power to enable them to proceed further.

By the English Constitution, my lords, Roman Catholics are excluded from political power, and it appears to me that to alter it in this respect, will be to do away with its very essence. Is it right or wrong to exclude the Roman Catholics from political power? The advocates of the bill may say that it was originally right, but that the reasons which justified their exclusion then, are no longer in existence. I would wish to examine the reasons which formerly justified their exclusion, and the circumstances which have caused these to exist no longer. Let your lordships for a moment examine

what ground there is for this opinion. Is it founded on some alteration in the character of the Roman Catholics, or on some important change in the leading features of their religion? The Roman Catholics are daily acquiring more consideration and power, and it surely is not therefore to be concluded, that these laws ought to be repealed.

Are your lordships prepared to say to the Roman Catholics—"When you were inconsiderable in numbers and property, we dreaded your influence, and we then gave no encouragement to your religion, because we considered it contrary to liberty and freedom of conscience; but we afterwards found out that an exaggerated sense of danger had induced us to impose heavy restraints upon you. We then relaxed our measures of precaution, and we repealed all the severe laws under the operation of which you laboured. In consequence of this conduct of ours, your population and your wealth have rapidly increased, and now that you have numbers and power sufficient to do us no harm, we rely with confidence on your moderation. Come then, and share with us all the authority, all the advantages we possess. Some little reservation must be made for the present, merely to blind unthinking Protestants; but very soon we will yield every thing and share with you the whole." Such is the effect of the principal argument in support of the bill, and nothing can be more inconsistent.

It is also contended, my lords, that the influence of the Pope is no longer an object of apprehension, I am convinced however, that the Church of Rome is so constituted, that to guard against it ought always to be an object of solicitude with this government. Its practice may vary somewhat, according to circumstances, or according to the character of a particular Pope; but its principles and its views are still the same.

The manner, in which, my lords, the Roman Catholic Church accommodates itself to circumstances is well known. At a time when men are not disposed to become proselytes, it adopts Pagan ceremonies, and incorporates them in the body of its rites. The Pagan name is changed, but the thing re-

mains the same as before. Points held to be most material, and which serve to distinguish Roman Catholics from Protestants, were given up to gain an object. In one country with the view of conciliating the people, married priests have been allowed to perform the ceremonies of the Church. I was astonished at the indulgence; and upon inquiry into it, learned that it was excused by the pretence that the celibacy of priests in the Roman Catholic Church is a matter of discipline—but not of doctrine. Where authority cannot be safely exerted, the Church is very accommodating; but where the Romish superstition completely prevails, as in Spain and Portugal, every point is insisted on. In fact, it is plain, that the desire of control remains unchanged in the Church of Rome, though the manner in which that control is exercised, may be changed according to circumstances.

I am ready to believe, my lords, that the present Pope would not instigate a massacre of St. Bartholomew, but when has the Church of Rome condemned that massacre? He perhaps would not recommend an edict of Nantes; but was that edict ever blamed by the Church of Rome? The present Pope, I will admit, may grant concessions; but zealots might rise to the head of that Church, and a future Pope reverse what the present would concede. The Pope is regarded as omnipotent, and no arrangement can now be obtained which might not be afterwards subject to reversal. Roman Catholics might, at one time, be directed to submit to their lawful sovereign, and afterwards be absolved from their allegiance. Another remarkable feature of the Roman Catholic religion is, the influence which its priests exercise for the purpose of acquiring property. At the close of life, when consolation is wanted, it is not their practice to breathe peace into the mind, but to create alarm, in order to make peace be purchased. Hence immense sacrifices are made by persons at the hour of death.

The facility, my lords, with which the priests recovered their power, after it had been lost, is exemplified by what recently occurred in France. Your lordships are aware that the Roman Catholic Church had been completely put down

in that country and its property seized during the Revolution. Something had been done for the clergy by the late government; but the present King had gone further and restored Church property. The effects of the encouragement given them were soon manifested by the influence they acquired. When the clergy showed themselves, after the restoration of the King, they were treated with the greatest contempt. It was not possible for the priests to walk the streets without being insulted; but, by perseverance and artifice, they gradually gained an ascendancy over minds disposed to superstition. The progress they have made is astonishing. Their zeal has chiefly been exercised in procuring the restoration of national property, and that not merely from the original purchasers, but from third parties into whose hands it had passed.

What has occurred, my lords, in France, is a fresh proof of the unchangeable character of the Roman Catholic religion, and that character I contend ought to be a just subject of apprehension with a British legislature, and its existence proves the danger of passing this bill. Such is the nature of the Roman Catholic religion, that it matters not how long an opposing force remains in action upon it; remove the force, and the evil exists as before. Like the story of the jar in an oriental tale;—when the cover was taken off, a column of smoke issued forth, and an imprisoned giant gradually arose, until his hand reached the skies; and as the Roman Catholic religion would do, this monster was no sooner set free from restraint, than he inflicted pain and misery all around him.

According to the bill now under consideration, my lords, a Roman Catholic might command the fleet or the army. He might be a member of the House of Commons, or he might sit in your lordships' House; he might be one of his Majesty's privy counsellors, or even a cabinet minister. Your lordships should consider what serious consequences might arise from such a measure as this. By the interpretation of the Constitution the King can do no wrong; and that principle certainly seems to require that no Roman Ca-

tholic should be placed in a situation in which his influence might be exerted against the liberties or the religion of the country. Should this bill pass, the King must still by law be a Protestant; but he might have Roman Catholic advisers. If the system is to be abandoned by which the country has hitherto been governed; would it not be better to allow the King to be a Roman Catholic and require his advisers to be Protestants?

It appears to me, my lords, that those who support the present bill wish to abandon the greater security of the Constitution, and to retain the less. Might not the advisers of the Crown, if Roman Catholics, secretly undermine the Established Church? Roman Catholics, are, it is true, excluded from educating youth in the University; but I see no provision in the bill which *excludes them from being tutors of the heir-apparent or the heir presumptive of the Crown*. If then the advisers of the Crown might be Roman Catholics, and if the heir to the throne might be educated by Roman Catholics, I will put it to your lordships to say upon what just ground the succession to the throne had been altered.

The noble lord anticipated serious consequences in Ireland from this measure. The Roman Catholic cannot be Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, but he might be Chief Secretary. It is the business of the Chief Secretary for Ireland to bring most subjects under the consideration of the Lord Lieutenant. If the Roman Catholic interest continues to increase in Ireland,—(as I have no doubt it would)—I do not see why we are not to expect that the Chief Secretary for Ireland would be influenced by the wishes of the Roman Catholics; and the consequence of this would be, that we can have no assurance that measures would not be adopted favourable to them, and unfavourable to the Protestants, but the expectation that the Lord Lieutenant would set himself firmly against everything that came from his confidential adviser.

I cannot but lament, my lords, the difference of opinion which exists on this important subject in his Majesty's councils. Some men may praise that difference of opinion; I, on

the contrary, feel that on great questions of State a unity of sentiment gives vigour to public councils, whilst the want of it paralyses the energies of those who preside over them. But it is said, that the influence of Roman Catholics will not be considerable—I contend, that they will have power in the other House of Parliament, while in this House, in addition to the Roman Catholic Peers, who will immediately come in, *a number of Roman Catholic Peers might be created by a Roman Catholic minister.* The Roman Catholic party would have considerable power; and any party acting in Parliament with energy and perseverance must ultimately obtain success. In such a state of things, what I will ask, would prevent the Roman Catholics from uniting with the Dissenters to oppose the Church Establishment to which both parties are equally hostile? Besides these direct and inevitable consequences from passing this measure, there is the natural though not immediate consequence of its creating an indifference amongst Protestants to that State, which no longer extends to them and to their Establishment its full and complete protection.

It is said, my lords, that this measure will secure the State a real union of support from the people of Ireland. To obtain such a union is my most earnest wish; but it is not alone a union with the Roman Catholics of Ireland I desire; are there not also the feelings of the Protestants of that country to be considered? I know that some of the latter yield with mistaken liberality their real sentiments upon this question, and overlook the historical incidents of their country, which are but too well calculated to excite apprehension. They cannot forget the proceedings in Ireland, in 1689, when James II. gave a temporary triumph to the Roman Catholic religion; they cannot forget the barbarity with which the Protestants were then persecuted and surrendered to an unbridled and licentious soldiery. The Protestant charters were then seized upon, and every insult heaped upon the professors of the Protestant religion, and, when James himself manifested some desire to secure to the Protestants those

possessions which he promised they should enjoy, the Roman Catholics refused to obey his order to restore what the Protestants had been despoiled of, *denied his authority in spiritual matters, and declared that upon such they owed allegiance to the See of Rome.* They also, at that time, declared Ireland independent of England in her government. That was the toleration extended by Roman Catholics to the Protestants of Ireland in the reign of James. For the sake, then, of the Protestants, I protest against this bill. To the securities it provides I alike object; they tend to remedy no anomaly, to reconcile no subsisting difficulty.

My lords, England has long enjoyed the benefit of her present form of laws. During their operation she has made a rapid progress in all the arts of civilized life: her arms have gained her the highest renown; and her Constitution has been the admiration of the Protestant and Roman Catholic, it secures to all the fullest enjoyment of toleration and personal protection. We ought never to forget the fact, that with the existing form of government is inseparably interwoven the Protestant Church; the one cannot be affected without the other. Tyranny is the great characteristic of an unlimited monarchy; caprice and uncertainty of a republic; and with the same unerring certainty can we trace in the principles of Roman Catholics a predilection for arbitrary power,—in those of Presbyterians a democratical tendency; while in the Protestant Government of this country the great distinguishing feature has ever been a practical demonstration of all the principles of national liberty, of justice, of order, of equal laws, and steady moderation. Is the glorious bulwark which exhibits such a spectacle to an admiring world, and which our ancestors cemented with their blood, to be now remodelled? Is this to be done, too, at the moment when the Church Establishment is assailed by open foes, and undermined by secret ones? Is this the moment selected for exposing this Church to the desertion of its national and natural support, and with it to the sacrifice of all those pure and salutary enjoyments which are now dispensed under its sacred influence and beneficial protec-

tion? For these reasons, my lords, I am bound to give the bill my decided opposition.

The amendment was carried by a majority of 39.

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR GEORGE HILL.

When a Committee on the Roman Catholic Petition was moved for in the House of Commons, May 14, 1805, the Right Honourable SIR GEORGE HILL delivered his Constitutional sentiments on this subject, in the following decisive strain.

SIR.—I shall not now further trespass on the patience of the House, than to contradict some unfounded assertions made by the honourable mover (Fox,) and a distinguished supporter of this petition (Mr. Grattan); but first, I must pronounce, that this question has been brought forward at this time to obtain thereby the weight and support of the influence of the Roman Catholic body to serve party purposes. The mover of this petition knows full well that obstacles insurmountable stand in the way of its success; that the minister, (Mr. Pitt) after consulting the highest authorities, and the judgment of the most experienced men around him, deemed it expedient to decline bringing it forward himself, and advised that it should not now be offered to Parliament. The leading and best-disposed Roman Catholics are believed to have held the same sentiments as to the propriety of withholding their claims for the present; but I charge that opposition, aided by the democratic part of the Roman Catholics, for having overruled this determination, and forced forward this discussion.

The honourable mover of the petition, Sir, and his friends were impelled by the hope of thereby discharging themselves from an obligation to the Roman Catholics, and of fixing against the minister the forfeiture of an alleged pledge he had given to that body; from this, however, the Chancellor of the Exchequer has been exculpated. I have myself, been constantly in the habit (I speak it with due humility) of giving him for many years my best political support; but I cannot, on the present occasion, consider him altogether blameless; feeling as I do that no individual possessed of great authority both from his character and situation, ought to announce his opinion and his desire to make such an innovation in the Constitution, without in some degree giving the Protestants a detail of those guards and securities (which he alludes to merely in general terms) for their liberties and for their estates.

Previous, Sir, to the possibility of admitting Roman Catholics to sit and vote in Parliament with safety to the Constitution, there are many alterations which their church and people ought to admit. I shall not now detail them, because I should still have my doubts; but sure I am, the Roman Catholics themselves ought—(if they are anxious to be believed sincere in their professions)—to make every change in their church government and discipline which Protestant security requires, and which the essentials of Roman Catholic faith will permit: such reform would afford more substantial security than reiterated promises, and professions, and tests.

There is, Sir, one preliminary indispensable; I mean a sufficient establishment, or fund, from whence to pay their clergy. The Irish Parliament has given them a seminary for the education of their candidate clergy, has endowed it munificently, induced to do so from the policy of placing over the ignorant lower orders in Ireland, a well-educated enlightened set of men. Having done so, it appears to me a necessary consequence, that a provision should be made for that clergy by the State, than that they should be left dependent on a savage multitude for their means of life, and

be reduced to the necessity of flattering the propensities and passions of that multitude, and conniving at, if not encouraging their crimes. You must, therefore, in order to rescue them from such a thralldom, and render them either good or safe members of the community, give them a moderate independence, and place them above such necessity. I shall now, Sir, content myself with noticing, as I proposed, some mistatements, and disproving them only at this late hour, by contradicting them without much detail.

The honourable mover (Fox) alleged that the ferocious manners of the Protestants of Ireland towards the Roman Catholics have rendered the latter description barbarous, if true it is, that they are barbarous, or unfit to enjoy civil liberty in its full extent; and yet both he and one of his friends (Grattan) deprecate any allusion to violences heretofore committed. So do I; but if such assertions are made, truth must be told. Too many proofs, Sir, exist up to the present hour of the aggressions and savage bigotry of the Roman Catholics; the history of centuries past proves it; modern times prove it; the events of the Rebellion prove it. Wexford fatally and lamentably proves it. Dr. M'Nevin proves it, who tells you of their antipathy to Protestants and Englishmen, whom they consider to be the same; and that the Roman Catholic body could at any time be brought forward to rebellion by the agency of their Priests; whom the leaders of the United Irishmen knew they could set in motion at any moment when requisite; and therefore it was that these leaders first directed their efforts to associate the Protestants of the north of Ireland by throwing out the lure of Parliamentary reform. But I revolt from these allusions as much as Opposition, whose unfounded assertions render them necessary.

I deny, Sir, utterly the colouring and statement of the seconder of this motion (Grattan) of the events and occurrences, and their causes, of the last twenty years, but more particularly as applicable to our unfortunate disturbances. I allege that the party occasioned by the anomalous proceedings of Parliament in 1789, during the regency question,

laid the groundwork of the United Irishmen, of the commotions, the rebellion, and consequent legislative Union between Great Britain and Ireland.

Sir, the King's recovery and discomfiture of Opposition produced those unconstitutional appeals of the honourable seconder and his friends to the physical force of the country. Too well for the peace of Ireland did he instruct them to reflect and rely upon that force, he and his friends, with this doctrine in their mouths, bid for and misled the Protestants of the north,—a gallant race of men devoted to Constitutional liberty—by promising them Parliamentary reform: the same gentleman bid for the Roman Catholics, by promising them emancipation. Accordingly the United Irish Association was formed in 1791-2, and a Roman Catholic convention was held in Dublin, and a Protestant convention at Dungannon, in furtherance of these objects, emancipation and reform. I shall not comment on these events, they were endeavoured to be curbed by Lord Clare's Convention Act, made subsequently with that view.

In 1795, Sir, Lord Fitzwilliam came Lord Lieutenant to Ireland, and the mover of this petition asserts that his recall and the breach of promise at that time, produced the rebellion of 1798. In making this assertion, he pronounces on his friend (Grattan) the most bitter, heart-rending judgment, that could have fallen from the lips of a friend; for he thereby charges him with being the author of that rebellion. I do positively in proof of this assert, and defy contradiction, that Lord Fitzwilliam was sent to Ireland with an instruction from the Cabinet of England to keep back the Roman Catholic claims, and further assert, that no authorized promise was made to them. But what did the worthy recorder (Grattan) do? Having been in London with Lord Fitzwilliam, to consult and advise with him on his future government of Ireland, he preceded him to that country; and instantly on his arrival, set every political engine at work, every channel of influence and flattery he possessed, to urge forward the Roman Catholics with their claims from all parts; insomuch that shortly after Lord Fitzwilliam did arrive, the

whole mischief was completed. The Cabinet felt that he had disobeyed their orders, and he was recalled; the Roman Catholics were not gratified. The honourable mover says rebellion was the consequence; if so, the House will estimate the obligation of his friend (Mr. Grattan) to him for his allusion to the fact.

After this period, Sir, the Roman Catholics were advised by public address, not to postpone their claims. England was in emphatic language described to be their enemy; that she must be pressed by them in time of war; the Roman Catholics must not postpone their claims to a moment of peace; they must be listened to in a time of distress and pressure to England. Is it for this reason they are brought forward now? I have my suspicions. The rebellion of 1798, and the union of the two parliaments, finish the period on which the two honourable friends have mostly dwelt.

I now, Sir, beg leave to deny their assertions respecting the proportionate number of Protestants and Roman Catholics; they are unproved, and made only for intimidation. I must also deny the honourable mover's doctrine of the principle of the British Constitution, as applied to the claim of power or franchise. I allege the principle to be equal protection to all, and rights of power or franchise to qualified persons. The guards of this constitution in the exercise of power or franchise, are tests, or the possession of property. I must also notice, Sir, a very loose proof he offers to us, that the Roman Catholics will not, if in power, meddle with property: the gentleman himself does not profess to approve of the Act of Settlement, but the Roman Catholics would not, he says, disturb it, because some of them have lately acquired property secured by it. At best this is no more than an appeal to their forbearance, and quantum of interest in it.

I shall now, lastly, Sir, make an observation on the property in Ireland. It exceeds, I am confident, in the hands of the Protestants that which is in the hands of the Roman Catholics, by a proportion which far outstrips the population of the latter beyond the former, I dare say that it is more than as twenty to one: for this we have an undoubted right

to have sufficient security. In five or six northern Irish counties, there is not one Roman Catholic gentleman qualified from estate to be a member of Parliament, or indeed that you ever meet in society; and this not from any severity of exclusion, but really that they do not exist amongst us. If then Roman Catholics were eligible to Parliament, and that the lower orders there are, as alleged, three to one, we should either be represented by strangers or by unlettered boors; for most unquestionably if the freeholders were Roman Catholics, the Priests would carry them for the Roman Catholic candidate.

Property is the criterion of political power more than the physical force of the self-willed multitude. The Protestants possess this superiority, and love the constitutional liberty which accompanies it: they have defended and fought for both in 1688 and 1798. I deny that the rebellion of 1798 was put down by other means than the Protestant exertions of Ireland; it was overcome and reduced before one English militia regiment landed in that country. I feel at the same time, every gratitude for the zeal and succour intended by that force; and if ever so direful a necessity should occur again, from either invasion or rebellion, I trust to the mutual support of the army and volunteers of both countries, and, in despite of all forebodings, have no doubt of the result.

S P E E C H

OF

SIR THOMAS LETHBRIDGE.

In the House of Commons, May 6th, 1825, when it was moved that the House should resolve itself into a Committee, on the Roman Catholic Bill, SIR THOMAS LETHBRIDGE, M.P. for Somersetshire, delivered his opinion in the following energetic strain.

SIR.—I will state shortly my views upon this question. This attempt at legislation depends upon the institution of oaths, and it goes to repeal that oath which every member has taken in the face of the House and the country—the oath of Supremacy. Although, no doubt, every honourable gentleman well remembers it, I beg that the clerk may read it. (The clerk read the oath accordingly, as taken at the table.)

If, then, Sir, it shall turn out that the bill before the House will have the effect of violating the oath which has been just read, I need not say what will be its effect on all honourable members who look at this subject in the same way as I do. There are two points of view from which this question may be contemplated. The first is, Sir, that every member who is returned to this House as a representative of the people of England, enters it upon the condition, implied if not expressed, that he will preserve the British Constitution in Church and State, as it has been handed down to us by our forefathers. This condition, according to my apprehension, no member is at liberty to get rid of. The persons by whom these honourable members have been returned are well aware of the nature and effect of this oath; and I am glad of the present opportunity of telling the House, that those persons are neither so ignorant nor so careless about it as they have been represented to be, but are sensibly alive to the course which is now proposed to the legislators of the country.

The other view I take of the subject, and which, Sir, in

my opinion, is not less forcible, is, that by a direct enactment, the House will recognize the authority of a foreign potentate. The terms of the oath which has been read are positively against any such introduction; and yet, by the bill, it is proposed to form a board of Roman Catholic bishops, who are beforehand engaged by a solemn oath to obey, in all respects, the authority of the Church of Rome. This I take to be a point which by no argument the House can get over. Arguments may be used against this with so much ingenuity, that I shall find it difficult, perhaps impossible, to answer them; but I deny that any man can controvert the fact which I here advance. I trust that the House will see its forcible effect, and not persist in a course which must stultify all the past experience of Parliament, and break down the securities which have been wisely provided for the protection of the Constitution.

If the House look to the preamble of the bill, they will find a great deal about the permanence and inviolability of the Protestant Church. I may, perhaps, be told, Sir, that I ought not to attempt to pull to pieces the bill; but whether in the opinion of others I ought, or ought not, still I shall do it. It is altogether a most vicious piece of legislation, and it can never be passed without a violation of that solemn engagement which we have entered into with one another and the country. There is in the very outset of this bill, a very curious anomaly. It talks, as I have said, of the preservation of the Protestant Establishment; and yet, in the subsequent parts of it, it proceeds to provide for the return of Roman Catholic members for Ireland. This, therefore, is to me not only an important point, but one which the House can in no way get over. However, Sir, not to dwell upon this, I will call the attention of honourable gentlemen to the statement, that the declarations relate only to matters of spiritual and religious belief, and not to the allegiance of his Majesty's subjects. The truth of this statement cannot be proved. If it can, why are Roman Catholic members not now sitting here? Why is it necessary to legislate for them at all? Do they not profess and entertain (and I give them credit for

the zeal and sincerity with which they do so) their faith in the supremacy of the Church of Rome; and do they not vow to continue that faith to their death? Their allegiance, then, is divided. The allegiance of the subjects of these realms ought to be entire, and be given to the Sovereign on the throne, who is acknowledged to be the supreme authority in all matters, spiritual as well as temporal.

Upon what pretence, then, Sir, can Roman Catholics pretend to a constitutional and undivided allegiance? It is a contradiction in terms to talk of it; and, in fact, is wholly opposed to the truth. What is the objection of the Roman Catholics to the oath of Supremacy? It is only for one little word, to which they cannot agree. And does the oath proposed by the bill before the House, (which they quarrel with because it is tightly worded,) obviate this objection? Have any of those persons whose evidence has been taken as conclusive authority in the committees, been asked if they would take this oath? I believe that no honourable and conscientious Roman Catholic could be found to take it. I may, perhaps, misunderstand the creed of the Roman Catholics, but I believe, nevertheless, that it will be found very difficult to induce any of them to take this oath. I wish to know whether the Roman Catholic bishops would do so?

I have read, Sir, through the evidence of Dr. Doyle. That reverend prelate was asked if he had taken an oath of obedience to the Pope of Rome; and he answered that he had. He was then asked if he recollected the contents of that oath, and he answered that he did not. It appears to me extraordinary, that a person of high character in the church to which he belongs should not know this. Dr. Doyle said, however, he could get a copy of the oath from the Vicar Apostolic: I do not know whether this oath has been seen by any member of the House: for myself, I have not been able to find it, high or low. I have, however, got a copy of an oath, which I believe is that taken by the Roman Catholic clergy, and which, although I will not pledge myself for its verbal accuracy, is, I believe, nearly correct. The persons making it swear to pay entire obedience to their lord the

Pope, and to assist him in the recovery of the Popedom, and the royalties belonging to it against all men,—to support his authority to the utmost of their power,—as far as is possible, to make other persons do so, and to receive as conclusive the decisions of the holy canons, and of the council of Trent. Now, Sir, how is it possible that persons who have taken this oath can, with a safe conscience, substitute for it another, which in every word and sentiment is opposed to it? It is impossible to do so without the commission of flat perjury; and this consideration, if it were the only one, is, in my opinion, so important, that it ought to influence the House against going into the committee.

With regard to the commission of Roman Catholic bishops, Sir, I object to this, because it is to be composed solely and wholly of those persons. In all the previous bills of a similar nature, security had been provided, by the introduction of Protestant counsellors among these bishops; but here there is to be no control over them; not even by the power of the Sovereign himself. Is this constitutional? Is it safe or expedient that this power should be vested in the hands of Roman Catholic bishops, who, as I have proved, have already taken an oath of unlimited obedience to the Pope? Is this like the wise and cautious proceedings of our forefathers, who, after they had established the civil and religious freedom of the nation, provided a sufficient security for their future preservation? But is there any security in this—that a Protestant Monarch, a Protestant Parliament, and a Protestant Church should succumb to a Roman Catholic faith? Honourable members on the other side of the question are always forward enough to declare their determination to support and uphold the present Church and State Establishment. Even on the occasion of a simple petition being presented, they are ready to start up and avow their fidelity towards the existing institutions; while their conduct is directly the reverse.

I will not detain the House much longer, Sir, having sifted the subject thoroughly, though I believe in an inefficient manner. But if there ever was a bill offered to Parliament full of vicious principles, this is it. It has been said, Sir, in

the course of the arguments used in support of the Roman Catholic claims, that the Irish Roman Catholics of the present day are not what they were a century ago—that they have become so altered, that we may now safely admit them within the pale of the Constitution. How stands the fact? The more we look into their measures—the more we enter into a view of their proceedings—the more we look into the conduct of the Roman Catholics, whether in Ireland or in any other part of the world—the more we shall be satisfied to the contrary. Whether we look to them in Ireland—whether we look to them in foreign countries—or, whether we look to them in the pages of the evidence adduced before the committee of this House, the more certainly shall we come to a contrary conclusion.

As to the evidence, Sir, before the committee of this House, it is, as may be expected, most carefully worded; it came out of the mouths of those who took care that it should be what is best calculated to forward their own interests under existing circumstances. Its general bearing is all one way; and unless I have read it with a great deal of prejudice, by which I have formed an erroneous opinion, it has no other tendency but that which I have described.

I must advert, Sir, to one or two passages in Dr. Doyle's evidence, which are conclusive on the subject. That reverend prelate has actually allowed that the Pope has authority over spiritual matters in Ireland; and when asked another question, he had also stated that the nomination of Irish Roman Catholic bishops had been settled by the Pope since the extinction of the Stuart family. This shows clearly, that the Pope has an influence in these realms which is inconsistent with the well-being of our government, as by law established. As to temporalities also, the same reverend prelate admitted, that if temporal offices were attached to the Roman Catholics, any interference by a Protestant monarch would be deemed inconsistent with the Roman Catholic religion. I believe this prelate spoke with sincerity—I believe that these doctrines are consistent with his creed—I believe they are in perfect accordance with all his views. It is so, and it ever

will be so; as this country will find, if the Roman Catholics be admitted within the pale of the Constitution.

Let any one, Sir, look to the feelings and sentiments of the same prelate, when writing to the secretary of the Kildare Catholic Rent Association. In his library and at his desk this Roman Catholic bishop deliberately promulgated opinions and doctrines to which I must ever feel myself opposed. He said, "the spirit of the Catholics had not yielded under oppression, but like the ruins of their ancient greatness, which overhung that town, (Kildare,) retained their venerable and majestic appearance, and reminded the beholder that it had once been great and free. Although now it was enslaved by the tyranny of a worthless and base faction, it could spare from its competence, or even its wretchedness, a part of what had escaped the hand of the despoiler." This certainly was a feeling promulgated before the institution of the committee up stairs.

But I cannot forget, Sir, from all that has been said in this House and elsewhere about getting up petitions, what had lately transpired, when a petition was getting up in the neighbourhood of Wetherby, in favour of the Roman Catholics. A Roman Catholic gentleman, of high standing, of great talents, and of considerable influence in that neighbourhood, after indulging in much eloquence against the anti-Roman Catholics, proceeded to a course which was quite declaratory of the views he entertains. The pith of what he said is this: "To see our abbeys, our cathedrals, and our churches confiscated and demolished; to see our patrimony thus given up to the cruelty of the Protestants, whose doctrines our consciences forbid us to believe, is beyond bearing." This, coming from a Roman Catholic gentleman and a layman, is quite sufficient to satisfy me of the danger of passing this bill. Will any man say that, if an opportunity occurred to recover what was lost, that individual would not lend his influence—that he would not feel himself bound to lend his influence to forward the views of the Roman Catholics; and that if he were in this House, he would not propose or pro-

mote a motion for the restoration of the Roman Catholics to all their ancient possessions?

I will now, Sir, advert to the Roman Catholic Testament put forth by Dr. Troy, in 1816. The preface of this work will show what is the true feeling of the Roman Catholics. The Papist is therein enjoined to burn or deface all heretical books, "for instance, the English Bible." The same preface goes on to warn the Roman Catholics to avoid the English Bible, as containing doctrines contagious and noisome; and to caution them against listening to the Protestants, as their prayers are no better than "the howling of wolves." I will not go further through the pages of this work; but I think it completely overturns the position, that the Papists of 1825 are not the same sort of people as the Papists of 1725.

I feel, Sir, I have said more than I ought; but I have uttered no more than what my feelings, and my duty towards the Constitution, compel me to say. Oaths are of the utmost importance. I have taken an oath, Sir, to perform my duty; and I never will take an oath which I afterwards intend to alter or violate. I can say, in spirit, with the late beloved Monarch, (George III.) who preceded the present, that, "*I am ready to descend from the throne—I am ready to descend to the cottage—I am ready to lay my head upon the block—but I am not prepared to violate the oaths I have taken.*" So I will say: I am not prepared to violate the oath of Supremacy which I have taken, before the House and all the country, and which cannot be reconciled, in my opinion, with the bill now before the House.

S P E E C H

OF

MR. BANKES.

When Mr. Plunkett brought forward his "Roman Catholic Disability Removal Bill," on March 16, 1821, Mr. BANKES, M. P., addressed the House in the following Constitutional manner.

SIR.—The principle of the bill which we are now assembled to discuss, is intended to be carried to a degree which cannot be approved of by those whose views of this subject, though liberal, are moderate. The principle of the measure concedes the right of admissibility to every office in the country, as belonging to every person of every sect. This is a principle somewhat similar to that which is held by individuals who contend for the radical doctrines of universal suffrage and annual parliaments—doctrines which I am convinced my right honourable friend holds in utter detestation. Now, I know no state that will admit to its dearest privileges persons who, to be consistent with themselves, must desire the destruction of an important portion of that state.

The Roman Catholic Church, Sir, will allow no communion with any other church: it holds, that no toleration should be granted to any other church; it declares that there can be no salvation out of the pale of that church. As to a communion with a different church, it would be considered, as the Pope himself has said, "like the communion between Christ and Belial." Persons professing this belief can, in my opinion, have no other desire than that the Protestant Establishment shall not be suffered to remain as it at present stands.

The honourable gentlemen who support this bill, though their fears do not go so far as mine, seem, however, to apprehend some danger of this sort. If they do not, why are these particular securities required? Or, why do they recur

to securities at all? Why does the right honourable gentleman contract the general right, which, in the first instance, he laid down so broadly? Why does he propose to exclude the Roman Catholics from any office whatever? If they have this sort of inherent right, why attempt to bar it in any degree? Why interfere with the Roman Catholics by any restriction, if they are, as the right honourable gentleman called them, liege and loyal subjects? But, I will ask, is this doctrine of inherent right, thus laid down, fair to the sovereign himself? If it be improper to exclude from certain situations an individual professing the Roman Catholic religion, what right have we to demand of the sovereign on the throne that he should profess particular tenets? There is something so revolting in this doctrine, that though the principle is laid down very widely at first, yet it is immediately after narrowed, for the purpose of showing that those who support this measure are willing, in some degree, to provide against danger.

But, Sir, those gentlemen argue, not only from the innocence of the Roman Catholics, with respect to any attack on the Protestant Church, but also from the impracticability of their effecting any sinister designs, even if they entertain such an intention, that the most perfect safety and security may be relied on. That safety and security, however, I wish to establish on a firmer basis. "What danger," demand the friends of the bill, "can be apprehended from the small number of peers who, if the bill passes, will sit in Parliament; or, from the few Roman Catholic members who will obtain seats in the House of Commons?" It is said, that the number of commoners who will obtain seats in Parliament, in all probability will not exceed one hundred; and that, from so small a body, no danger can reasonably be apprehended. The number, however, does not at all affect the principle of the measure. But I will go further, and contend, that even so small a number as one hundred members—nay, less than that number—when leagued together in this House for any specific purpose, may, within no very long time, have an opportunity of causing themselves to be effectually heard in Par-

liament. Divided as this House might be, such a body, acting in unison, would ultimately possess the power of effecting any object they might take in hand. And might it not, under such circumstances as I have alluded to, become the object, and the attainable object, of men, powerful with respect to their connexion, and powerful also with respect to money, to bring forward, in any one parliament, a vastly greater number of persons of the Roman Catholic persuasion than the usual average amounted to?

What, Sir, have we to oppose to this evident danger? We are told that the succession of the crown is "permanently and inviolably established in the Protestant Church." This is our security. But what is the meaning of the words "permanent and inviolable?" Let the House consider, when we are legislating, how weak and feeble any such clause must be, when opposed to new circumstances, and advanced against all those occurrences which time may roll on them. There is nothing so foolish as to think of legislating for futurity. How is it possible to contend, that, against any such danger as I have described, and against instruments so powerful to carry it into effect, that we can find safety in these miserable securities of permanency and inviolability?

The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Plunkett), has stated, that the question is to be done with for ever—that the present measure is to close the door against any further agitation of this subject. Is it really possible that a gentleman of his acuteness can suppose, that what was originally possessed by the Roman Catholics, would not again be sought for? While any thing remains unconceded, they will be anxious to grasp and to possess it. When Parliament grants concessions, we are only building up steps by which the Roman Catholics will endeavour to reach at greater immunities. Can the right honourable gentleman imagine, that the exclusion from honours, distinctions, and offices, in which only a few of the Roman Catholic population can hope to participate, would have the effect of inflaming all Ireland, from one end to the other, and yet, that a system which touches their property—which affects that, the slight-

est interference with which every man is alive to—would create no irritation of feeling? Would they take no step to remove what they must necessarily look on as a material grievance? Would they not consider it a great injury to be subjected to the maintenance of a church which they hold in abhorrence? If they would not, they must be men of a different description from those born in any other country. Does the right honourable gentleman believe, that this settlement can be fixed permanently—that it can be made to last for ever?

When Roman Catholic members, Sir, get into this House, be their numbers greater or fewer, will they not, when possessed of the privilege of being heard within these walls, immediately set about freeing themselves from that which they must feel to be a most vexatious grievance? There are others, also, who feel this tax on their property to be a grievance; who look with jealousy on the Protestant, as the dominant Church, and who would therefore lend their assistance to the Roman Catholic, to remove the burthen.

That the Roman Catholics, Sir, would suffer the ascendancy of the Protestant Establishment, after this measure passed, appears to be a thing as impossible as it would be for the most common cause not to produce its natural and necessary effect. If the bill be carried, I know not how the Protestant Church in Ireland can remain in its present state. I suppose the business will go on in this way:—first of all, some underrate Roman Catholic Establishment will be asked for; and afterwards, by the means I have stated, a further Establishment will be demanded and granted. But, if it were found that such an establishment swallowed up the revenue, and that the credit of the country was sinking in consequence—would not the politicians, such as I have described, endeavour to defray the expense from the Church Establishment? And would not this naturally lead to an alteration in benefices and clerical appointments?

My right honourable friend (Mr. Plunkett) declared, on a former occasion, that things were in such a situation as rendered it impossible for them so to remain; and therefore

something must be done. Now, it cannot be denied that much has been done. And, with regard to granting the elective franchise originally, I will say, that it was a concession in contradiction to all sound policy. It should have been granted, either in a more full latitude, or else those who proposed it should have stopped short. But it may be said, why not repeal it, if it be so absurd? There are many things which, if once passed into a law, cannot be repealed. Of this I have no doubt, that *the concession in question will appear ere long to be fraught with the greatest danger, and that many gentlemen who now hear me will live to see the evils which I am predicting.* To repeal the elective franchise granted to the Irish Roman Catholics is impossible; * that measure was in this respect similar to the Union, with regard to which I stated, that it was an experiment that if once made could never be undone, whatever might be its consequences. Since, therefore, what has been done, cannot be recalled, it becomes the House to be the more careful and jealous in granting any further concessions of the same dangerous nature:—“*quod datum est, non volui; quod reliquum est, non dabo.*”

* Though it be impolitic to deprive the Roman Catholics of Ireland, of the elective franchise, yet it is obviously necessary, that the qualification of the lowest species should be immediately increased.

S P E E C H

OF

L O R D G E O R G E B E R E S F O R D .

At a Public Meeting of the Protestant Nobility, Gentry, and Clergy of Ireland, held at Armagh, October 6th, 1826, LORD GEORGE BERESFORD, of the County Waterford, delivered the following oration, amidst the most enthusiastic plaudits.

GENTLEMEN.—I should be more or less than man, were I insensible to the honourable distinction with which the mention of my name has been received by you on the present occasion. Calumniated and traduced as to my personal motives, and disappointed by unconstitutional and unfair practices, of the just object of my ambition in that county in which I was born, and in which the best exertions of my family, from the first moment of their connexion with it, have been uniformly directed to the promotion of individual and public good, it is to me matter of proud exultation to find the integrity of my conduct duly appreciated; and those very principles which rendered me obnoxious to my opponents, re-asserted, nay, claimed, as their own by an assembly like that which I see around me—composed of men of the most unsuspected loyalty and independence—and, I will add, though the terms have been hacknied even to disgust, of the most liberal and enlarged minds. I must, indeed, be the most pusillanimous man on earth, if with such pledges of support and countenance, as those which you have spontaneously offered, I should be unable to brave those studied misrepresentations, and those foul returns of unkindness, to which every one who aims at public situations is exposed, and of which I have had my share.

Gentlemen, until the present time it has been recognized as a first principle, by our wisest legislators, and by the ablest advocates of the Romanists themselves, that the Con-

stitution of the empire is essentially Protestant; and that the Protestant ascendancy, if you will call it by that name, is ever to be kept in view in all the details of legislation respecting the Roman Catholic claims. If it be not so, I scruple not to say that the restricting of the succession to a Protestant monarch is the greatest of all political anomalies, and the most unjust and wanton restraint on the conscience of those illustrious personages who may wear the crown. It is for our firm adherence to these fundamental principles of the British Constitution, as finally settled at the Revolution, that we are designated bigots and intolerants. If I am not justified in identifying my principles with your own, I beseech you to correct my error. But I perceive that I do not mistake your sentiments. If I understand you right, you would impose no greater restrictions on any class of subjects than the security of our Protestant Establishment in Church and State (a security synonymous with the public good) renders imperative. You would debar none from the enjoyment of legislative or executive power, but those whose principles and conduct make it but too manifest that they would not use it well;—that they covet the possession of power, not as the means of honourable advancement, but as an engine for subverting those institutions, which, by the first principles of our Constitution, are to be accounted sacred and inviolable.

But, gentlemen, the question is often put to us what do you propose to do in the present feverish state of this part of the empire—some remedy must be applied? First, I would concede nothing to intimidation. Secondly, I would not purchase a hollow and treacherous truce, by placing in the hands of those I vainly attempt to conciliate, a weapon of offence, which will be used in attempting to wrench from us by force, that which I am determined not to grant, whilst I am permitted to guide myself by the established principles of the Constitution. Once, indeed, surrender the bulwarks and the defences, and it may then be asked with some propriety, “What will you now do?” after you have brought yourself to the distressing alternative of open warfare, or of an unconditional surrender of the Protestant Constitution.

If, then, I am asked what is to be done in the present state of the country, and in the incessant clamours for emancipation, I unhesitatingly answer, let the Roman Catholic gentry, and after them the peasantry, emancipate themselves. Let them free themselves from all foreign influence, from an influence not recognized by the State—let them free themselves from their subjection to the Priesthood in civil concerns—let them abandon the visionary hope of making their religion dominant in Ireland, and then the avenues of political power will be as open to them as to other classes of citizens. But, if they cannot thus qualify themselves as legislators of a Protestant empire, let them cease to complain of exclusion as a grievance, which is but a necessary security to ourselves.

It must not, gentlemen, be concealed that one class of our opponents consists of those who see little danger to the Protestant Establishment in conceding those further privileges which we think it necessary to withhold. They are, like ourselves, determined to support a Protestant Establishment. The Roman Catholics claim them as their friends, but they will be found their determined adversaries. With these men we are agreed in principle, though not in our conclusions. To such persons I would in all plainness say, look at what has recently taken place amongst us. It was not ambiguously worded declarations, or accommodating forms of subscription, on which you relied for security to our Protestant institutions; but it was, in effect and in plain speaking, on the hereditary, the wholesome, the natural connexion between landlord and tenant, that intermediate and binding link in the order of our society, on which you placed your dependence, as the only counterpoise to priestly power, as a sufficient barrier against the inroads of an infuriated populace—impelled they knew not whither by a designing Priesthood, hostile alike by religious principle and self-interest, to a Protestant government. This was in fact your fancied security. I ask now what has been the result throughout Ireland? I cannot anticipate what may be the effects which recent scenes must have produced on the minds of members of both Houses

of Parliament. I can only declare my own conviction, that such is the genius of the Roman Catholic religion amongst ourselves, that were the doors of the House of Commons open to Roman Catholics, the virtual representation of this country would be immediately vested in the hands of the Priesthood, to be wielded at their discretion, and to be made subservient to their own ends. What that discretion is, and what those ends are, is surely no longer a question of doubt to any thinking man.

Emancipation, as it is insidiously called, is but the stepping-stone to the attainment of ulterior objects. Those objects are unattainable, as long as the British Protestant Constitution remains in being. Destroy that Constitution, and an unlimited field is laid open for political experiment; but beyond the confines of the present Constitution, it should be remembered all is a chaos: what kind of evils are lurking in its womb we may easily conjecture, but their magnitude and duration, when brought into life and vigour, are incalculable.

The peculiarity of the late contests at elections in this country, I maintain, as I have elsewhere maintained, consisted in this, that it was, strictly speaking, *a contest between the landed proprietary and the Priests of the Church of Rome*. Between those who have the greatest stake in the country, and those who are connected with society, by none of the common ties of fathers and husbands, but who are the sworn vassals of a foreign power, bound by motives of obedience paramount to all others, and by motives moreover of personal and religious aggrandizement, inimical to a Protestant Establishment. Between such men, and the landed proprietors, whether Protestant or Roman Catholic, the contest lay. It is natural that I should appeal in proof of this to what has taken place in my own circumstances, and with regard to my own family.

If any Protestant landlord was calculated, by the influence of rank, property, or character, to counteract the spiritual interference of the Romish Priesthood, it was my deceased brother (the MARQUIS OF WATERFORD). You will bear with me in passing this merited eulogium on his

departed worth. Intimately acquainted, by a long residence, with all the local interests of his country; unceasingly devoted to the promotion of its welfare, and mixed up with all its important business, he had improved into a feeling of personal attachment, the respect which was due to his station and public virtues. I dare not trust myself with the mention of him in his domestic and friendly relations, (his lordship became evidently and strongly affected, and called forth the sympathies of his auditory). I speak but of his public life; and I assert, with confidence and with pride, that the late Marquis of Waterford was deservedly popular. His means of doing good were ample, and his benefits were diffused through a widely extended circle. His tried integrity secured confidence, and his affability and courteous demeanour won upon all ranks of men, for all had easy access to him. As a landlord, his memory will be long cherished; not even priestly interference could restrain the spontaneous effusions of gratitude and affection which burst forth from his numerous tenantry.

Had the people been suffered to vote agreeably to the warmth of their feelings, and to subsisting ties, had not religious terrors been resorted to, where simple persuasion was unavailing, by the confession of my opponents, even of Mr. O'Connell himself, I should have been returned by a triumphant majority; and the county of Waterford would have been spared a contest which has been productive of little less than the disorganization of society—a contest which has taught the people to consider their interests as dissevered from those of their legitimate guardians and protectors. But priestly power bore down all before it, in opposition to the wishes of the landed proprietors. I envy not my opponent a triumph so gained; but I deeply regret the mischief which must inevitably result from such a state of things to the people themselves.

I would ask any man to compare the county of Waterford as it now is, with the county of Waterford as it was before the late election. The religious persecution of those who continued steadfast to their landlord, is still going on. There

seems to be a holy and political emulation in proving to these unhappy victims of attachment to their ancient benefactors, that the threats of spiritual vengeance are not idle menaces. I need not tell you that the county of Waterford exhibits not a solitary instance of these unconstitutional practices; but even a single instance is sufficient to prove that the recognized and legitimate connexion between landlord and tenant is but a weak barrier, when opposed to that irresistible authority, even in civil matters, with which the Priesthood of the Church of Rome is invested, and which they fail not to exercise whenever the occasion for putting it forth is deemed of sufficient importance. What is more, I maintain that the influence of the Romish Priesthood over the tenants of those landed proprietors who are favourers of what is termed emancipation, is not less powerful than when exerted against those landlords who are opposers of emancipation. I speak from local knowledge and accurate information, perfectly elucidated by the published correspondence between Mr. Wilmot Horton and Mr. Blount.

I am far from denying to the Roman Catholic Priesthood a fair and legitimate exercise of opinion and influence, as members of the commonwealth—such an exercise as is claimed for our own clergy, and which we are willing to concede to others: but I denounce, as unconstitutional, as subversive of the natural gradations of society, as destructive to the elements of civil liberty, as controlling free-agency itself, and as converting the people into the mere puppets and machines of the Priesthood, the employment of the spiritual armoury, and the multiplied contrivances of intimidation possessed by a self-named infallible Church, to whose dictates its unhappy members have no choice but to submit in silence. I repeat, that the denial of sacramental rites, and the threat of inflicting all the vengeance of the Church, have been resorted to by the Priesthood to bind the people to their will; that the menace of eternal perdition has been used as an electioneering topic; that the most solemn emblem of their religion, the very crucifix itself, has been exhibited to work upon the passions of the people, and to enforce the

dread of priestly malediction; that denunciations have been proclaimed from the altar against the hesitating and undecided, and their persons thus marked out as objects to the vengeance of the more determined votaries; whilst the Priests of the Church of Rome, I repeat, (said Lord George emphatically,) in great numbers, suspending for a time their sacred functions, mixed themselves with the lower populace, and relying on the mysterious influence with which superstition has clothed their character, succeeded in dragging to the hustings those who had a short time before pledged themselves to support their landlords. Were the Protestant Clergy, or any order of men, possessed of such a dangerous and undefined influence (the more dangerous because undefined,) over the minds of their followers—were they, from whatever cause, capable of exercising such a despotic right over the conscience and actions of men—a right not subject to the guidance of the State, and independent of its authority, I should be the first man to say, that such a spiritual influence was incompatible with civil order; and that both the persons exercising, and the persons submitting to this frightful sway, were incapacitated by that very circumstance from being entrusted with political power in a free country. After all this, will it be again asserted that the Romish Church has been stripped of its civil influence, and that it is no longer to be dreaded as a political engine? The fact is, that this unconstitutional power exists—that it forms an *imperium in imperio*—that its power is exerted in a Protestant country, and directed against Protestant establishments.

If gentlemen are content to give up these establishments, it is well; let them but speak out. For my part, I am not prepared for such a consummation. I speak but as a consistent Protestant, and as a firm defender of a Protestant government. Here I take my stand, and resolutely refuse those concessions which are to be employed against myself; for I plainly discern a spiritual influence in this country hostile to the Constitution as settled at the Revolution, calculated to bear down before it every civil and natural barrier, on the strength of which we have been encouraged to de-

pend, as the security of our Constitution; and actually, by a premature and indiscreet display of its irresistible force, manifesting what we may expect from it were it elevated to political power.

Gentlemen.—I have detained you too long; the topics, however, on which I have dwelt, are of no common interest. If ever the Protestant Constitution needed strenuous and straight-forward advocates, it is at this moment. The attacks made upon it in former times were open and avowed, and we knew how to resist them. They are now disguised and insidious. I only say, let us not be put off our guard. For what is personal to myself in the present indication of your good-will, accept as from a friend to friends my sincerest thanks. Upon this open, this united, this spontaneous display of Protestant feeling, I tender to you my hearty congratulations. The real sentiments of the Protestant Gentry of this great and powerful part of the empire need but to be made known, in order to secure the permanence of our Establishment.

SPEECH

OF

HENRY MAXWELL, ESQ.

M. P. FOR THE COUNTY OF CAVAN.

When the Protestants of Ireland assembled at Armagh, October 6th, 1826, A. ST. GEORGE, Esq. High Sheriff of the County, in the Chair; HENRY MAXWELL, Esq. M. P. for the County of Cavan, thus addressed the Meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN.—I feel myself totally unable to convey to you the high sense which I entertain of the honour you have conferred upon me. That my public conduct and principles should receive, in so marked a man-

ner, the approbation of the gentlemen of the county of Armagh, is to me a source of the highest gratification. When I see around me so many gentlemen of rank, of talent, and of influence, all united for the grand object, all animated with the warmest attachment to our invaluable Constitution, and resolved to stand forward in its defence, and to save it from destruction, I confess I derive the greatest encouragement, and that I will wait with confidence a successful issue of the contest in which we are engaged.

We all know the exertions which our enemies are making, to introduce innovations into our Constitution,—to change its Protestant character,—to substitute, in the place of Protestant ascendancy, a system of Popery and Priestcraft, totally subversive of every principle of civil and religious liberty; and to bring back Ireland to the same state of bigotry, civil dissension, and religious slavery, from which the Glorious Revolution disenthralled her. We are engaged in an arduous struggle,—we are called upon to fight the battle of the Constitution; and the difficulties which we have to encounter are the more formidable, because the *cōsciencies* of men are forced into the contest. I say, “*forced* into the contest,” because whatever may be the real wishes and inclinations of the Roman Catholics, the power of the Priests can control those wishes, can compel them to forego those inclinations, and to adopt *their* principles, and to follow *their* directions.

There never was a time when it was more incumbent on every loyal man, according to his means and his abilities, whatever may be his station in life, to come forward in defence of his dearest rights and liberties, to stem that torrent of false liberality, or rather of undisguised hostility to Protestantism, which would sweep away from the face of our country all that is valuable in the British Constitution,—would undermine the foundations of that venerable fabric, “which was planned by the heads of sages, and cemented by the blood of patriots,” and involve in inevitable ruin the Protestant institutions of this empire.

I assert, gentlemen, that the British Constitution is essen-

tially and fundamentally Protestant,—that the great work which was commenced at the Reformation, was perfected by the Glorious Revolution, from which we have derived those principles of Constitutional freedom, which have raised Great Britain to her high pre-eminence above all the other nations of the world. It is that stamp of Protestantism which is impressed upon every part of her Constitution, that has enabled her to maintain her rank in the scale of nations; and while other kingdoms have been either shaken to the very centre with revolutions and civil discord, or vanquished by a foreign foe, she has still bid defiance to every opposing danger:—she has risen superior to all her difficulties, and she has derived additional strength from every attempt that has been made to crush her. It is her Protestant character, which insures to every subject of these dominions the blessing of civil and religious liberty. It allows to every individual, without fear or restraint, whatever be his religion, to worship his God according to the dictates of his own conscience. It extends to the Protestant and to the Roman Catholic, the equal protection of the law; and if *the one* is not admitted as well as *the other*, to the full enjoyment of all the privileges of the Constitution, it is because *the one* is not willing to conform to those conditions, without which *the other* would be equally inadmissible.

The Roman Catholics are taught to believe that they are in a state of slavery, that their energies are depressed, and that nothing can give them effectual relief, but total and unconditional emancipation. Their leaders tell them this!

“ They talk of freedom, in their senseless moods,
Yet still revolt, when truth would set them free.”

It is not to the exclusion of Roman Catholics from places of honour, of profit, and emolument, that we are to attribute the misfortunes of Ireland, the wretched condition of her people, or that spirit of discontent and disaffection which pervades so large a portion of her community. It is not the removal of these disabilities which will operate as a charm

in healing the wounds of Ireland, as a panacea for all her evils, and a balm for every woe. No, gentlemen, Roman Catholic emancipation would not in the slightest degree improve the condition of Ireland: it would only tend to give additional power to those to whom the distracted state of this country may justly be attributed; and, with increase of power, it would give to them increased means of mischief. It would not unfetter those poor deluded people, who are now the ready tools of every factious agitator, and who have surrendered their wills, and made their consciences subservient to the vile machinations of an intolerant, intriguing, and ambitious Priesthood. I would ask, in the language of the immortal Milton:

“ What wise and valiant man could hope to free
Those, thus degenerate, by themselves enslaved,
Or could, of inward slaves, make outward free.”

Gentlemen, there is an emancipation which I would give to the Roman Catholics. Not that, falsely so called—which, if conceded by the legislature, would rivet more closely those chains by which the great mass of the people are enslaved; which, for centuries, have kept them in a state of the grossest ignorance,—which have debarred them from the blessings of religious education,—depressed the energies of the Irish people, and which alone retard the course of national improvement: I would give them emancipation from the thralldom in which they are held. I would free them from that state of bondage in which the self-interested policy and tyranny of their Priests has bound them: I would teach them to assert the right of private judgment, to use the faculties which God has given them, and to follow, uncontrolled by any priestly interference, the guidance and the dictates of their own consciences. The Roman Catholics are taught to seek for “happy homes and altars free.” They have their *altars free*. Our Constitution allows to them unrestricted liberty of conscience. And, if their homes are not the abodes of happiness, the fault rests not with the

state of the laws, nor with the manner in which those laws are administered, it is not chargeable to the Protestant landlords and gentlemen of Ireland,—but it rests with their own demagogues, and the Popish Priesthood,—with those who, instead of inculcating obedience to the laws, contentment with their situation, gratitude to their benefactors, and kindly feelings towards those who differ from them merely in matters of religion, use the unbounded influence which they possess over their actions, in rendering them discontented, implacable, and ungrateful.

We have recently seen the purposes to which the power of the Roman Catholic Priesthood has been applied. We have during the late elections ourselves observed what use they made of the immense authority which they possess over the consciences of their flocks. We have heard them openly, in the public streets, threatening with every species of injury, AND WITH ETERNAL DAMNATION, such freeholders as should dare to exercise their own judgment, and vote contrary to the wishes of the Priesthood. We have seen their threats of injury put into execution; and numerous instances have occurred within my own observation, where Roman Catholics have been denounced from the altars,—denied the rites of their Church, and have suffered injury in their persons, and in their property; for conscientiously exercising that privilege, to which they are constitutionally entitled. We are well acquainted with the result of the different elections, where the influence of the Roman Catholic Priests was exerted. In one county alone were their labours unsuccessful, and in that they experienced a signal defeat.

Gentlemen, in the county of Cavan the Priests strained every nerve; they left no means untried to secure the election of two gentlemen, who were avowedly favourable to the claims of the Roman Catholics; but in the county of Cavan the principles of the Constitution have prevailed over the machinations of the Priesthood. But, though we were there triumphant, we are not intoxicated with our success. We are alive to a sense of the dangers from which we have escaped, and we should endeavour to prevent their

recurrence. We see the difficulties with which we are surrounded. The conduct of the Roman Catholic Priesthood has awakened more than our suspicions. We are compelled to view them in that character, in which the history of this country has always portrayed them, as the natural and implacable enemies of a Protestant government—as the ministers of an intolerant religion, which is unchanged and unchangeable. One of their own bishops has vouched for their loyalty, in terms which are neither vague nor ambiguous. Dr. Doyle has asserted, “that should a rebellion rage from Carrickfergus to Cape Clear, no sentence of excommunication would be fulminated by a Roman Catholic prelate.”

Let us turn our attention to the Roman Catholic Association. In opposition to the express provisions of an act of Parliament, this body continues its sittings UNMOLESTED. And what is the character of its proceedings? It has imposed a tax upon the Roman Catholics of Ireland—it has insulted the King’s prerogative, by the burlesque establishment of “The Order of Liberators.” Its orators have proclaimed the Church Establishment to be a “gorgeous nuisance,” and they have openly asserted that the titles by which the Protestant landlords of Ireland hold their estates are invalid. Are we not accustomed to hear persons of the highest rank, and of the most distinguished character, vilified and abused? While neither the sanctity of the mitre, the purity of the judicial bench, nor the impartial and incorrupt conduct of our magistrates, are sufficient to protect from insult those whose virtues alone render them obnoxious to these demagogues. In speaking of these agitators I would apply that forcible appeal, which a celebrated Roman Catholic writer, Dr. O’Connor, made to the people of England. “Englishmen, in the name of wisdom and constitutional legislation, emancipate Ireland from such empirics as these puddle-lawyers and divines, whose only object is to become leaders, and to render themselves conspicuous at the expense of their country.”

I feel, gentlemen, that I have trespassed too long upon

your attention; but before I conclude, I would congratulate the cause of Protestantism upon the most respectable and most numerous assemblage which I have the honour to address; and I trust that other counties will speedily follow the noble example which Armagh has set them. It is thus that the government and people of England will be made acquainted with the real sentiments of the great body of the landed proprietors of Ireland, upon that question which is made the source of the agitation of the country.

I would adjure the PROTESTANTS OF IRELAND to rally round our Constitution; to petition the legislature against any further encroachments upon our constitutional privileges; to represent to Parliament the real state of Ireland; (for it has been most grossly *misrepresented*) and particularly to submit to the candid and unbiassed decision of the English people, the conduct of the Popish Priesthood during the recent elections.

Let Protestants display but the same zeal and union of purpose in defence of their rights and privileges, which their enemies display in their attempt to subvert them, and the cause of Protestantism will yet be triumphant. For myself I can truly say, that my humble talents and exertions are devoted to the good of my country; and that, were I to desert my post, or to abandon that cause to which (ever since I have been capable of forming an opinion) my inclination and my duty have attached me, I should but ill deserve the good opinion of my Protestant fellow-subjects, I should abuse the confidence of my constituents and forfeit all claim to be considered as one of the Protestant representatives of the independent county of Cavan.

(The honourable gentleman concluded amidst loud and reiterated cheering.)

SPEECH

OF

GEORGE HILL, ESQ.

HIGH SHERIFF OF DERRY.

When Lord George Beresford was entertained by the Protestant Gentry and Landed Proprietors of Derry, October 3d, 1826, the High Sheriff, GEORGE HILL, Esq. presided, and in the course of the proceedings, thus addressed the Meeting.

GENTLEMEN.—The moment is now arrived, when in the fulfilment of that duty which, on this occasion, I have pride and honour in discharging, I am to call your attention to the object of this assemblage. You have met here, to welcome and compliment a nobleman, who was, for a period, the representative of this county, whose steadiness in his private friendships has only been equalled by his consistency in politics, and the name of whose family has been associated for centuries, with the best interests of Ireland. These, however, are not alone the inducements which should lead us to give a sincere and cordial reception to LORD GEORGE BERESFORD. He has been a severe sufferer at the late Waterford election, from his determined and uncompromising maintenance of those Protestant principles that are identified with the Constitution; which form the sure and certain security to the Throne, the Church, and the People; and which, the events of each succeeding year, loaded, as it were, with prophetic inspiration, warn us to preserve sacred and inviolate.

We, therefore, most anxiously desire to assure him of our gratitude, for the great and important sacrifices he has made during that contest, to the Protestant cause, whereby he has offered an example, which, unless it is spiritedly and generally followed by those connected with the landed property of Ireland, the political equally as the spiritual authority of a

foreign prince, must be fixed and confirmed throughout this land. It is, however, my happy lot to address, on this occasion, those who, by their opinions, expressed so often and so publicly, have proved that they draw correct inferences from the history of past ages; who acknowledge that, wheresoever the spirit of Popery intermingles, it expels even the semblance of toleration, and annihilates the pure effects of true civil and religious liberty. I speak also to gentlemen, before whom it is almost needless to unfold the more modern instances of Roman Catholic craft and intrigue; you need not be warned to avoid its wily encroachments, to spurn its arrogant Jesuitism, or to watch, with caution and circumspection, the specious character of its professions. No, gentlemen, even was it necessary, at any time, to remind the city and county of Derry of the deceitful and designing political doctrines which the Papists would endeavour to establish, that task is now remitted.

We have seen Lord George Beresford deprived of his proud situation, as a member of the Imperial Parliament, by the unconstitutional and illegal interference of the Roman Catholic Association, backed by the audacious activity of the Papal Priesthood, who, despising the mild precepts of Christianity, co-operated with that body, under the control of those crusaders for notoriety and self-aggrandizement, the rent-feed barristers from Dublin. These clerical politicians have applied to the purposes of election interest, the bigotry and superstition of the peasantry in the south, and afforded an apposite illustration to the world, why it has always been their wish and policy to keep this deluded class in ignorance and error, uneducated and unenlightened.

But what has occurred in Waterford? The legitimate influence of the landed proprietor was violently assailed and overthrown; the free exercise of the elective franchise was checked: superstitious fear hung over the elector as he voted, and the dread of excommunication caused him to falter in the performance of his plighted promises. The Priest, the meek minister of the Gospel, armed with the undefined and unlimited power of the Church, held the cruci-

fix, with our Saviour's image imprinted on its front, to the reluctant and hesitating voter, proffered all the blessings of heaven to the apostate from that fidelity which equally and reciprocally binds the landlord and the tenant, while he heaped all the terror of ecclesiastical vengeance on the man who refused to renounce his faith, and give to the winds his gratitude and conviction.

Gentlemen, may I presume to urge, that we should show, by meetings, by petitions, by unanimous and strenuous exertions, that this conspiracy against our constitutional rights, demands the immediate attention, the shield, and redress of Parliament. While, withal, we must be satisfied that we have only acted as we ought, and gratified the honest feelings of our hearts, in receiving, with distinction and applause, an honourable man, who has done his duty to his country and himself, firmly and with fortitude.

SPEECH

OF THE

REV. DR. ROMNEY ROBINSON.

At a numerous Meeting of the Protestant Nobility, Clergy, and Gentry, assembled at Armagh, October 6th, 1826, Acheson St. George, Esq., High Sheriff, in the Chair, the REV. DR. ROMNEY ROBINSON, late a Fellow of the Protestant University of Dublin, delivered the following eloquent oration.

MR. SHERIFF AND GENTLEMEN.—I rise to return thanks in the name of the University; not, however, considering myself entitled to appear as its representative by any superiority of talent or intimacy of connexion with it. I see in this assembly some whose rank and estimation in the University far surpasses mine. I see many who have drawn more largely from the sources of information which it affords—but even at the hazard of being thought presumptuous, I am drawn forward by an imperious debt of gratitude, for none here

present can owe to it obligations so incalculable as those by which I am bound. But for it, still enslaved by early prejudices, fettered in manhood by the pernicious principles which caught my infancy, I might still have been but a child in political wisdom: I might at this very hour have been prostituting whatever talent I have received from Providence, to the subversion of social order, and the destruction of the Constitution. But its instruction dispelled the delusion, and my mind was opened to receive this great truth, that there is neither safety nor virtue in aught but a steady and determined course, a hearty and unswerving support of the Constitution as by law established. (Cheers.)

This then must plead my excuse—but no, I will make no apology; the sympathy, the cheering of an assembly like this, would warm the coldest spirit, and who can refuse your call? Yet even this assembly is not such as it ought to be—one thing is yet wanting. They to whom in this season of doubt and danger we look with confidence and hope, why are any of them absent? One of those bright stars by whose light we steer amid the darkness and the storm—for him a sufficient apology has been made, if indeed any apology be requisite to those who know GEORGE ROBERT DAWSON. But where are they who represent Protestant Fermanagh? Where the members for Tyrone? Where they of Louth? for even in that county, dishonoured and brutified as it is, we retain one defender. Why are they not to be found, when their duty so imperiously calls them? Can it be, that they are dead to the call, that they are indifferent to the high Protestant feelings which are the pride and the blessing of Ulster? Can it be, that they are not aware of this meeting? Can it be, that they are blind to the past, and heedless of the present? that they will not even take warning from the unanimity and art of their opponents? It is a fault, a grievous fault, which I hope shall, ere long, be well redeemed.* Yet so, you are an assemblage of whom I may well be proud, whose approbation would be cheaply bought, though the

* Protestant meetings were soon after held in Fermanagh, Tyrone, and several other counties in Ireland.

price was danger, or even death. It merits to be valued not because you comprise so much of rank, wealth, respectability, and talent, but because you are the concentrated essence of all that is excellent in the land, the chosen flower of the chosen portion of our country, because you are Protestants in heart and mind.

I can conceive a class of persons whose praise would impress an instant conviction of guilt, a brand of disgrace; from whose admiration every good man would shrink as from a serpent, the self-called liberals, whom we have heard so thoroughly exposed to the contempt they merit; they who so mask under the cover of a specious name their hatred of existing institutions, their indifference to all religion, their cowardly hope of bartering *all* that they ought to hold and maintain for personal security. But on beings so mean-spirited, so ignoble, it is useless to dwell; they have no place among us; and we attach little more importance to the approbation of those whom they patronize, the claimants of emancipation. They excite pity rather than contempt or aversion; they do require emancipation, and I trust shall have it, an emancipation from the thralldom of their clergy; a liberation from the yoke of superstition. They are like those wretches whom the cruelty of their northern ancestors pressed down by hurdles into a morass to perish by a lingering death; their spiritual tyrants the instruments of torture, their hopeless ignorance the gulph in which they sink. Are such persons qualified to decide on the destiny of our nation, or reform our Constitution! In every rank, from the hovel of the peasant to the stately palaces of the aristocracy, they stand in intellectual cultivation, and its attendant blessings far below their Protestant brethren. I shall be called illiberal, but I state facts.

In my parochial labours I have often remarked the difference between their cottages; a practised eye will discern at once the religion of the inmate by the appearance of his dwelling—superior comfort, decency, cleanliness, being as it were the temporal rewards of true religion. Shall I be thought a partial witness? Take the evidence of one of the

arch-demagogue's satellites (Bric) whose dulness often defeats the mischief which he plans. He lately, when seeking to divide a tenantry from their landlord, stated this distinctly: "Look round you," said he, "at your Protestant neighbours; compare your lot with theirs, are they not better fed than you; better clothed, better lodged?" He chose to refer the difference to tyranny! oppression! partial magistrates, &c. but he knew that his explanation was false, he knew it in his soul, for on that estate the Roman Catholics were encouraged, were, I might almost say, preferred to Protestants; all possible kindness was heaped upon them, their religion is predominant in that district, and the inevitable conclusion is, that it makes them miserable because it keeps them ignorant.

If we ascend in the scale of society, the difference continues; the middle class of landed proprietors, and the commercial rank, seem as if pressed down by the operation of a dead weight, which prevents them from attaining that vantage ground which their wealth might seem to claim, but which cannot be reached by minds fettered in the trammels of superstition, and disabled from any vigorous exertion of intellectual cultivation. Their task-masters know that as soon as their followers presume to think for themselves, their sway is lost. They act like the savages of the fable, who deprived their slaves of reason by poisonous drugs, lest they should fly from the horrors of their condition. But in the highest ranks of society the prospect is yet more gloomy; there is not on earth a more admirable being than the Protestant gentleman, the Protestant nobleman, ornamenting his high station by an enlightened and cultivated understanding, hallowing it by the knowledge and practice of that religion which he knows and feels to be true; while the unhappy Roman Catholic, subjected by his superior importance to a more rigorous control from his spiritual guides, is either utterly enslaved by them, and barred from the attainments becoming his rank, or if he be of more elastic spirit, he makes no distinction between the Church of Christ and the rubbish which they have heaped upon it—he rushes into desperate infidelity made yet more disgusting by hypocrisy.

Gentlemen, you hold a high place, but if you deserve to hold it, let it never be forgotten that you owe all your blessings to the Reformation. But for that you would be what the inhabitants of Spain are now, the most wretched of nations, instead of being here assembled to assert the cause of civil and religious liberty, to strengthen the bulwarks which our ancestors raised against religious despotism, you might have been rivetting the chains which a tyrant placed on you, following the procession of some apocryphal saint; or, on some day of peculiar happiness, assisting at an *auto de fe*, where some miserable Jew, or more miserable heretic, who had dared to read the Bible, and find that Popery was not of God, is “burnt at a slow fire.” Feel the advantages you possess, and, feeling, secure them; give to all within your influence a moral and religious education. Hold firm in your affections the Word of God—diffuse and circulate it through the land; for it is the talisman at whose touch the throne of the “man of sin” shall shiver into dust.

And this recalls me to that body* on behalf of which I address you. During its existence it has been invariably and essentially Protestant. It was founded for the purpose of opposing the growth of Popery in Ireland, by that glorious Sovereign† who may be said to have established the Church of England in its actual stability and beauty; it was fostered by her successor,‡ by him whose wise policy in colonizing Ulster with Protestants, has secured at least one province of our country from barbarism. In prosperity and distress, in calm and in storm, in good and ill repute, the University was true to its principles, from which no peril could make it swerve. For it was not exempt from trials. We have been told, that history is but an old almanack—that its records, the collected experience of so many ages, so many nations, is worse than useless, is infinitely less valuable than the testimony of an insidious Priest, and an artful demagogue. Yet the University is not without some excuse for regarding these gentlemen with suspicion. The last of the

* University of Dublin.

† Elizabeth.

‡ James I.

Stuarts was fortunate in obtaining a fit instrument for his design of purifying his only remaining kingdom from the stain of heresy, a thorough liberal, the then Lord Lieutenant, a *Richard* by name, the infamy of whose character can never die. This man counselled his master to commence by the destruction of the University; and the first blow was struck through the medium of a Priest, who, by a strange fatality, was a Dr. Doyle. That similarity of destiny I trust will continue, for Doyle blundered in his instructions, and by giving premature warning, defeated his aim: when art failed, open violence was used; the fellows were ejected, their chambers filled with prisoners, and horses stabled in their chapel,—their very library was devoted to the flames, when the victory of the Boyne arrested persecution, and delivered us, I trust *for ever* from spiritual oppression.

But, the merits of the University do not consist merely in patience under persecution; it has given to our cause many of its noblest champions; it were useless to name those living ornaments of the Protestant name whom you know and cherish; it were long to tell of those who were master-spirits in the times of old. But there are some who cannot be passed by. Who has not heard of Usher, that ornament of the primacy, who, when yet a child, foiled in debate a Jesuit, more able and not less dishonest than him who in our own days has confounded certain children of a larger growth? Who that is a real Protestant does not venerate her immortal works, the inexhaustible magazine of those weapons, which, whenever Popery exhibits its doctrines on the field of contest, crush it with unfailing certainty? Who is ignorant of Bedell's fame, who has left us an auxiliary which, I trust, shall at no remote date carry the warfare into the citadel of our enemy, the Irish Scriptures! whose mind presented in perfect beauty the graces of the Christian character; who, when confined in a damp and unwholesome prison by the murderers of 1641, fought "the good fight" to the last, and resigning his spirit to God that gave it, extorted even from those men of blood, the acknowledgment that he was a man of God? Let me add to these two divines, a layman, of no common merit, and

I shall have proved the claim of the University to your regard; his name may sound strange in your ears, the record of his deeds be unknown or forgotten by you, but this ought not to be.

We now content ourselves with reading the newspapers and pamphlets of the day, to the exclusion of the true fountains of political knowledge, and thus continue ignorant of the true principles which should influence our conduct. Let me then entreat your indulgence while I retrace one of the *old Almanacks*. The misguided James, dissatisfied with the dilatory proceedings of his Ministers, urged more active measures—Lord Lieutenant, Chief Justice, Attorney General, Parliament, all were devoted to his cause, and they produced the most atrocious act that perhaps was ever framed. It commanded a number of persons who were named in it to surrender themselves before a certain day; it attainted those who should not comply, declared them traitors, and pronounced the forfeiture of all their possessions. The act comprises, in brief, every Protestant of note or name in Ireland; I found in it the name of Caulfield—had I foreseen when the record was in my possession, that what *is* would come to pass, I might have found the name of Brownlow. But it may be said, this is the vengeance exacted by a triumphant party from its vanquished enemy. No, Mr. Chairman, it was of a deeper dye; of a wickedness which could only have been engendered by the bigotry which produced it. The act was not published till the day of surrender was past, and thus the flower of the nation were intended to be consigned to beggary and judicial murder, without the possibility of escape. Nay, more, as if they feared that James might shrink from the execution of his own wishes, this act contained a clause providing that the “King should have no power to pardon under it,” thus lopping from the prerogative its noblest branch. When I add that this mystery of iniquity was penetrated by Mr. Coghlan, the representative of the Dublin University,—that he warned the Protestant leaders to be upon their guard,—that this warning sent out the heroes of Enniskillen to the field, and kindled

the fire which blasted the assailants of Derry, have I not said enough, or is more required, to show how much we are indebted to the University? Need I remind you of Swift, who, were he on earth, how demagogues and associations would moulder into ashes before the lightning of his indignation! of Molyneux, the friend of Locke, the friend of liberty, who retired from the polluted land which he could not save, and returned when the victorious foot of William pressed its shores and cleansed its stains; and representing our University in Parliament, aided in the enactment of those restrictions, which, though some have since been relaxed, cannot be totally dissolved without the ruin of the Constitution. How must *he* look down on the degenerate policy, the short-sighted weakness of his *successor*!! (Mr. Plunkett.)

And this leads me to the only part of my subject which it is impossible to touch without pain; and would I could deny with truth that the Protestant University of Dublin, shares with the Protestant County of Armagh, the misfortune of being inadequately represented. Of the delusion which gave it an organ incapable of uttering its sentiments; a man whose opinions are at utter variance with the (I believe) unanimous voice of its constituents—whose political conduct has often been opposed to their best interests; who has even shown on a late occasion how little he respects them personally, when their testimony would bring to light truths adverse to his party—I have nothing to say, for I can say nothing that would satisfy myself. And yet they are more fortunate than this county, for they may plead in extenuation, if not excuse, the associations of early talent, the associations of contemporary toils and triumphs; they may urge official rank, political consistency, great, and till lately, *unimpeachable* talent, which has in some instances been gloriously exerted for the good of the empire. Yet still the blot remains, and we can only hope that the University may never in future be so unfortunate.

Before I conclude, let me suggest to you the impropriety of letting this meeting dissolve without some practical result, something more permanent than the expression of sentiments,

however true or constitutionally expressed. We have, I feel assured, experienced much good from the events of this evening: let us take measures to ensure their recurrence. Let us, at least, unite ourselves by the ties of social intercourse, as we are joined by those of a common faith and a common interest. If justice had lost its impartial character, and while it permitted one party to violate the law, and outrage Government, regarded with suspicion and visited with vengeance even the defensive efforts of the other—even in that worst case, which I hope can never come to pass, the Protestants of Ulster should know each other. Let us diffuse among the Protestants of the province of Ulster the intimacy of personal acquaintance, and no longer remain as we are at present, the insulated members of a mighty body.

Far be it from me, to recommend the lawless example of our adversaries; but we require to know each other, to strengthen our moral resources, and to seek relief in the sympathy of friendship, from that storm of persecution by which, in scorn of our calumniators, I assert that the Protestants are assailed—of that persecution I have even this night heard details. I do not wish to excite any angry feelings; but in justice to ourselves they ought to be transmitted in an authentic form to the legislature which too often confounds the silence of complaint with the absence of wrong. I have no doubt that such a proposal will be stigmatized as illiberal; by this time, I trust, we understand the actual value of that epithet; and while convinced of the legality of our conduct, and the rectitude of our intentions, will submit to it with patience. We shall hear that the Roman Catholics will be exasperated by our presuming to dine together four or five times a-year; many of them would, if left to their own feelings, I am firmly convinced, live with us in perfect peace; and they who guide them cannot be more hostile than they are at present. Do what we may, they cannot hate us more than they do.

And as to danger—is that a motive to influence the generous or brave? Let the unprincipled agitator talk of his five, his six, seven, eight millions of Roman Catholics—the whole

population of Ireland not exceeding six—let him taunt us with our five hundred thousand, when in Ulster and Leinster alone there are a million and a half of Protestants. All this is folly. Undisciplined numbers never won a field; we have seen in India millions swept away before a handful of Europeans—a few thousands of our forefathers scattered all the mighty hosts of myriads of their Roman Catholic countrymen. For me, when Sir George Hill is present, it is unnecessary to remind you of the men of Derry; but I owe to that county, where the lot of my life was nearly cast, not to pass in silence the defence of Fermanagh by 2,000 of its gallant people against four potent armies guided by one of the ablest generals of the age. They were invincible in moral strength and the assurance that God was with them.

If, therefore, it must be so, let their leader, whoever he may be, some bold, bad man, fierce in the debate and timid in the field, cheer on his millions to that combat of which he loves to talk, but let him know that they go to inevitable destruction. Even did you stand alone, the event would not be doubtful, but, with Britain by your side, a week—nay, a day, would crush his power and hopes, never to rise again. No doubt individuals would suffer much at the moment of explosion; but who would shrink when his reward would be so great? No doubt our condition is not free from peril; but it must terminate in the happiness of this country. Our state is that of the tropical regions at the beginning of their spring—the ground is dry and parched, the sky dark and threatening, the air fraught with every element of tempest—at length the storm bursts, the thunder roars, the bolt shivers tree and tower, but its fury dies away, a shower follows the elemental strife, and the havoc that the former has made is effaced by the rapid and luxuriant vegetation that succeeds; the earth is clothed with beauty, and the heart of man is filled with gladness.

S P E E C H

OF THE

REVEREND CHARLES BOYTON,

FELLOW OF TRINITY COLLEGE, DUBLIN.

When the Protestant Clergy and Gentry entertained Colonel Verner, at Omagh, County of Tyrone, the High Sheriff, MR. VESEY, in the Chair, November 6, 1826, on "The Protestant University of Dublin" being given, the REV. CHARLES BOYTON, a Fellow of this University rose, and thus addressed the Meeting.

MR. SHERIFF AND GENTLEMEN.—The toast which has been just announced to you, and which has been so warmly received, calls me forward, as the senior member of that body now present, to offer you my acknowledgments. The pleasure which I feel in addressing an assembly like the present, is much enhanced by the reflection that I am connected with an institution, which traces the date of her existence to the earliest establishment of Protestantism in this country. The legislature of the land has committed to her charge the education of the youth of different communions in this country; and there are many duties of a judicial nature, belonging to the heads of that body, which it is of importance to have discharged, not merely uprightly but without even suspicion of partiality—that the stream of justice should be not merely untainted but unsullied. Doubtless, we contemplate an emergency, in which she must come forward to assert those principles to which she owes her existence. There is a point at which forbearance would cease to be a virtue. That time once already arrived, and acting upon those principles, her members, in the days of James II. submitted to expulsion and want.

Mr. Plunkett, gentlemen, obtained possession of the representation of Dublin College at a period in which the question

of Roman Catholic emancipation had not as yet assumed an attitude so vitally menacing the existence of our Constitution. He had upon the College great claims—the claim of great talent—and the great claim of extended private friendship among its electors. His connexion with the government of the Country is now superadded—and, above all, the unwillingness in calmer and graver minds to involve in the vortex of political discussion young men within their care.

But nothing can be more erroneous than the conclusions drawn from those two facts to which I have adverted—namely, that the body is wanting in the anxious wish for the prosperity of Protestantism in this kingdom. What gentlemen! that she, founded on Protestant principles, and endowed by Protestant munificence—that she should forget the spirit which everywhere breathes through her charters, to which every member of her body is bound by oath in obedience—that those members should forget their oath on admission to the Corporation, to make the advancement of the Protestant Church the end and objects of their pursuits through life; that they should forget that this advancement is the cause alleged by James I. for bestowing upon them the elective franchise.—Impossible. Was I to speak from my own observation, I might securely say, that out of the ninety-six College electors, I am not acquainted with twelve holding sentiments favourable to Roman Catholic emancipation.

Before I sit down, gentlemen, let me endeavour to impress upon your mind the importance, nay, the necessity of immediate exertion. Petition Parliament. Tell the legislature that your opinions have been misrepresented—that the Protestants of this country are opposed to what is called Roman Catholic emancipation. Public opinion has great weight in all State measures in this free country. Have a care that indolence or negligence should throw this weight into the other scale. You have the feeling of the people of England along with you—you have an advocate in THE FIRST SUBJECT OF THE STATE. You have the wisdom of ELDON and

LIVERPOOL approving you—you have able supporters of your cause in both Houses of Parliament—you have the talents, the zeal, of the honest, able, and, above all, the willing GEORGE DAWSON in your service—you have the firmness, the ability, the spotless integrity and British heart of ROBERT PEEL engaged in your cause. He steers the bark which carries the Protestant Constitution and its fortunes—though the storm burst, and the sea break, with him at the helm, she puts her bow to the wave, and rides over the perils of the deep—

“ Such men are raised to station and command,
 When Providence means mercy to a land;
 He speaks, and they appear—to him they owe
 Skill to direct, and strength to strike the blow—
 To manage with address, to seize with power,
 The crisis of the dark, decisive hour.”

The decisive hour is now at hand—and that it be not dark rests with the Protestants themselves. If we be true to our cause we may defy our enemies. If Protestants be firm, let the Roman Catholic Association bluster as it will—let them rejoice in the miseries of their country over the wants of the peasantry—the embarrassment of the merchant—or let them gloat with savage ferocity over the bodily indisposition of her prince—yet all will avail nothing. They may set the country in a flame—but their own cause will perish in the conflagration; whilst Protestantism, like the heart of her illustrious and blessed martyr, will be found unconsumed in the ashes.

Let the Protestants come forward now, or let them come forward never. Let them come forward fearlessly—what have we to fear? (Cheers, and cries of “Nothing to fear.”) Shall the Protestants, who possess nineteen-twentieths of the property of the country, be intimidated? (Cries of “No—never.”) Let, then, the Protestants come forward boldly, and represent to the legislature the dangers

by which the Constitution is beset, and the legislature will listen to their voices. When the Protestants do this, they will have performed their duty to their country, to their families and posterity, and may God prosper their exertions.

SPEECH

OF THE

REVEREND DR. MILLER.

At a numerous Meeting of the Protestant Clergy and Gentry, held at Armagh, October 6, 1826, A. St. George, Esq., High Sheriff of the county, in the Chair, the REV. DR. MILLER, late a Fellow of Trinity College, Dublin, addressed the assemblage in the following eloquent manner.

SIR.—On the part of the Established Church, I wish to repel a charge of illiberality, which has been frequently brought against us, because we are desirous of continuing to hold that position in which we have been stationed by the Constitution. I have heard much, Sir, of liberality as a most commendable principle of action. I have been told, that it is unworthy of a reasonable and reflecting man not to be liberal; and that in all our public conduct we ought to be guided only by a consideration of what is liberal, and what is the contrary. This grand principle of liberality has also been described to me as the perfection of the improvement of the present day, all the narrow prejudices and limitations of former times having been at length completely exploded. I determined, therefore, to use my best exertions for ascertaining what this principle of liberality is, that I might be enabled to act up to the dignity of my nature, by regulating my conduct in strict correspondence to a characteristic so noble.

The first person whom I consulted on this interesting question, Sir, directed me to read a treatise written by the Reverend Sydney Smith, which was represented to me as the very oracle of liberality. I studied it accordingly with the most eager curiosity. In this oracular work I found indeed many things which seemed to me a little strange; but I continued to read in the expectation that all would be explained and reconciled when I should come to the conclusion. But what was my surprize at finding that what this admired writer recommended could not be liberality at all! "I advise you," said he to the electors, "never to give a vote to any man, whose only title for asking it is, that he means to continue the punishments, privations, and incapacities of any human beings, *merely* because they worship God in the way they think best." Now, Sir, as I certainly would neither impose nor continue any punishment, privation, or incapacity, for any such reason, and as I verily believe that neither would any one individual in this room act upon such a principle, and yet am strongly inclined to believe that I and the whole company surrounding me, are all considered by the liberal party as very illiberal, I am forced to conclude that the Reverend Sydney Smith really knew nothing about the matter, or at least did not choose to trust the public with his sentiments.

In this embarrassment, Sir, I judged it necessary to have recourse again to personal inquiry, and I accordingly questioned some of my friends, who professed to belong to this new and attractive school. By them I was informed that the grand principle is to make no distinctions among men on account of any religious peculiarities, but to open alike to all the power and the advantage of every situation in the State. I heard much at the same time of the absolute necessity of having all altars free, and of the abominable wickedness of standing between a man and his God. By these additional observations I was not a little puzzled; for I knew of no altar which is not as free as the most fervent votary can desire, and the only person, who, according to my view of the matter, stands between a man and his God,

is the Roman Catholic Priest, who is rather a favourite with the liberal party.

However, Sir, getting over these difficulties as well as I could, or rather pushing them aside out of my way, I directed my attention to the principle itself. This I could distinctly understand; and so far my object of inquiry was attained. But I could not avoid considering with myself, whether those who professed this doctrine did fairly act up to their own principle. When I look round me in society, I see a great multitude of persons, who are indeed subject to the disadvantages of having no property, but in every other respect are men just like others. Now, if we are required by this principle of liberality, not to consider whether there be anything in the religious enslavement of a Roman Catholic which unfits him for the exercise of the right of a legislator in a Protestant government, I am inclined to conclude, that by the same principle we are equally debarred from considering whether there be anything in the indigence of a poor man which might interfere with the independence of his public conduct in the exercise of such a right, or even of the lower right of an elector.

So that, really, Sir, it seems to me, that in all fairness of consistency the liberal man, according to this notion of liberality, is bound to be an advocate for universal suffrage. If he stop short of this, he halts between two opinions: and he has no right to recommend his example to our imitation, until he boldly and steadily follows his principle to all its conclusions. For, Sir, consider the fair import of his own reasoning. If the majority should possess political power, merely because they are the majority, the poor must always be the majority, and therefore ought to possess the dominion of the State. If all men ought to possess equal rights, whatever may be the influences of their particular circumstances, in giving a bias to their political conduct, why should the indigence of a poor man be regarded as a disqualification? It is certainly possible that the poorest man may be honest and independent in his conduct, as it is also possible that a Roman Catholic may disregard the political sugges-

tions of his clergy. Let these self-named liberals, then, be consistent, and let us at once have a government of the mob.

Though this scheme would certainly be productive of some inconvenience to the present liberals, that would not, however, be quite so great as might at first be conceived. If we suppose the great proprietors of this country, who are now flamingly liberal, struck by the force of my representations, should determine to act fairly up to their own principles of liberality, and to embrace the scheme of universal suffrage, no doubt can be entertained that they would be speedily stripped of those extensive domains, which at present constitute no inconsiderable part of their importance, and I suppose afford them not a little comfort and gratification. But, then consider, Sir, that as they would immediately become poor themselves, they would have the same right against the new possessors of those properties, and, if they should be fortunate, might happen to be reinstated. The recovery of possession, indeed, would be but temporary; because, as in this case they would be again rich, they must of course become again poor; but then there would be a most agreeable alternation, which would keep society as much alive and attentive, as a company surrounding a gaming-table, with this peculiar advantage, that the poor man would always be the winner. If these great proprietors should determine to act in this fair and consistent manner, I certainly should be of opinion, that their principle would, for its steady and uniform application, be entitled to much respect. But until I see that principle so maintained, I must regard them as very unsatisfactory specimens of liberality.

Thus disappointed in my inquiries among living men, I resolved to endeavour to learn from my books in what this much celebrated liberality consists. And here, Sir, guess my astonishment when I discovered, that the original liberal was James II., and that the worthy liberals of the present day, with all their beautiful pretensions to modern enlargement of mind, are but treading in the footsteps of that prince, and pursuing the course which provoked the Revolution of

England. James II., however desirous he was of setting up Popery, was too prudent to avow at once that this was his object; and therefore began exactly in the mode of modern liberality, with issuing a declaration of universal indulgence. The *ostensible principle* was, that no difference of religious belief or worship should constitute a political disqualification. The *real object* was to overturn the religion and liberty of the country. In this original essay of liberality, the resistance, it should be for ever remembered with gratitude and respect, was made by seven Bishops of the Established Church, who, when they had refused to obey the command requiring them to cause the royal declaration to be published in their churches, quietly submitted themselves to be tried by their country for the courage with which they had saved the Constitution. At their acquittal the metropolis of the kingdom was so *illiberal*, as to break out into a general rejoicing; and the very army which James had collected to enforce his system of liberality at the point of the bayonet, echoed their exultation. It is true that James was hindered by the obstinate prejudices of the people of England, from exhibiting in that country a fair specimen of his system, for he and his liberality were speedily driven away. But in Ireland he enjoyed a sufficient opportunity of manifesting its true spirit and character, and I conceive that it proved to be of a kind which could not be acceptable to any man not resolved to go to mass.

But what will you think, Sir, when I shall have satisfied you, that the modern liberals have not even the gratification of the old rake, who delighted in committing *the oldest sins the newest kind of ways*; for even the most remarkable and efficacious part of the modern liberality has been actually anticipated by that prince. I find, in Somerville's history, that James constituted a commission of Lords Regulators, for the purpose of inquiring into the sentiments of electors, in order that no persons should be elected who would not vote for the repeal of the tests and the penal statutes. Here then is the original precedent which the Roman Catholic clergy of Ireland so vigorously followed at the late election. James did

not, indeed, directly employ the Popish Priests in this commission, for matters had not then been prepared for their interference; but the principle and the object of their interference were the same, and the difference of the agents was then unavoidable.

The result, therefore, Sir, of all my inquiries was the most painful disappointment; for, instead of discovering some new principle of human conduct, which, while it should dazzle with the splendour of its conception, would afford the high gratification of feeling that I was participating in the intellectual progress of an improving world, I found that I was sent backward almost a century and a half, to learn rules of policy from the conduct of a bigoted and treacherous tyrant. My inquiries did, however, furnish me with one useful conclusion, for they taught me to consider this much-famed liberality as nothing more than the free-thinking of policy; and as bearing the same relation to sound principles of political conduct, which infidelity bears to religion. I must, therefore, content myself with my old notion on this subject, and consider true liberality as an anxious desire that the opinions of every man, and especially his religious opinions should be perfectly free, and that every man, in every condition of life, and of every profession and creed, should be admissible to enjoy all the advantage and all the power which can be reconciled with the general security of the public freedom. Consistently with this principle, I hold that political power is not an advantage for the gratification of private ambition, but a trust for the benefit of the public, to be granted only to those to whom the interests of the public may be safely confided—and while I rejoice in the civil freedom of my Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, I conceive that I am not illiberal in wishing to withhold from them situations of power, for which I lament that I must consider them as disqualified by the want of religious liberty.

The great Poet of antiquity has said, Sir, that “*the day of slavery takes away the half of manly virtue.*” I must feel, in the like manner, that the mental enslavement of a man, who suffers himself to be ruled by the dictation of his

church, takes away the half of his political virtue, and unfits him to be trusted equally with other men in a government of Protestants. For my own church I hope that I may be permitted to say, that as it has sprung from the inherent liberty of the Constitution of England, so did it, in the memorable crisis to which I have had occasion to allude, discharge the debt of filial gratitude by being foremost in the preservation of its parent. I hope that it will never be forgotten, that if the seven Bishops had meanly submitted to the unconstitutional order of James, the issue might have been deplorably different; at least that they had the glory of exposing themselves, with calm intrepidity, to the first danger of the struggle.

And let me, Sir, at the same time, assure my Presbyterian brethren, that we consider the orthodox part of them as men who are kept asunder from us only by the difficulty which all feel in overcoming long-established habits, and would gladly see them comprehended within our pale, and enjoying, equally with ourselves, every advantage which we possess. The Protestant Dissenters, in general, we are anxious to regard as fellow-workers with ourselves in the cause of civil and religious freedom, lamenting that some of them have been so deluded by a pretended liberality, as to seek that freedom in conjunction with a church which denies to its own members the freedom of thought in the most important of all their concerns.

S P E E C H
OF THE
REVEREND TIGHE GREGORY.

At a Meeting of the Guild of Merchants, convened to petition against the Roman Catholic Claims, and held in Dublin, October 18th, 1826, Charles Thorpe and Hickman Kearney, Esqrs. senior and junior Masters, in the Chair, the REV. TIGHE GREGORY thus addressed the numerous Meeting.

I BEG it to be understood, that no man entertains a higher opinion of the Roman Catholics, as individuals, than I do; and amongst them I have enjoyed the society of many, from whose company I have derived not only pleasure, but advantage. I have been acquainted with one of that religion, now no more, (Mr. Hay, late Secretary to the Roman Catholics of Ireland,) who was an honour to any party, or any creed. He had, however, suffered deeply through the ingratitude of those whose cause he had espoused, and had breathed out his last sigh in the most extreme want and misery. This fact, however, may serve to prove how silly it is to depend upon the promises of the party, and to show to those compromising Protestants how vain it is to lend their assistance to a measure which, should it succeed, must tend to the subversion of the Protestant Constitution. It will show the degree of gratitude the Protestant apostate may expect, when the fangs of poverty are permitted to seize upon the old and tried servant of the Roman Catholic body, and he is suffered to expire in the deepest and most deplorable wretchedness. Can it be supposed that they will be more favoured than he had been, or that they will have more to console them for their desertion from the ramparts of the Constitution, than the evanescent breath of perishing popularity?

That the Roman Catholic religion is unchanged, un-

changing, and unchangeable, we have been told by the most talented members of the body; it has been sounded forth in their assemblies, and sent to the world through the medium of the press; and I believe that the spirit of the religion is exactly as it has been described. When King James II. abdicated the throne, he convened a Parliament, and the first act of that Parliament was an attainder on the nobility, clergy, gentry, and yeomanry of the kingdom, including the whole in the charge (nominal as it was) of high treason. The manner in which this had been received should never be forgotten. The Commons of that day received the announcement with the most overwhelming plaudits; and I hope and trust that such a House of Commons shall never again be known in this or the sister-country; which, however, might be expected, should the Roman Catholics creep into power. They have already crept into importance, and have displayed their consciousness of it by their endeavours to proceed further; and those endeavours should prove to us the danger of granting their wishes.

When the elective franchise had been conceded to the Roman Catholics, it was urged that they were but a small body, that few would vote, or if they did, that the Protestants would outnumber them; and that the boon was totally valueless. It has, however, been proved that the boon is not of such trifling value, from the use which has been made of it; and I will oppose any further concession on that single account.

One of their (Roman Catholic) speakers, on a late occasion, stated, that if they had a Parliament in Ireland, four-fifths of that Parliament would be in favour of the Roman Catholic claims. Assuming this to be fact, I will put it forward as a proof coming from their own lips of the danger that might occur from their getting into power. The aspiring spirit of their leaders and demagogues is well known, and it is equally well known that their inflammatory language has turned into the ways of disloyalty, those who had hitherto walked in the paths of rectitude and social order. Acts of Parliament have been perverted to achieve

the temporary substantiation of any false proposition; the mind of the multitude is enflamed by the statements of wrongs that do not exist, and degradations that they do not feel; and the current of popular feeling is excited by representations, that the Roman Catholic body far exceeds the Protestant population in point of number. If the latter statement were correct, we are bound to take care that, although they have the balance of number, they should not have the balance of power; that the ambition of those who care little for their instruments, so-as they achieve their designs, should be checked in its career, and that they will find the members of the Protestant community, with one heart, prepared to stop their future progression.

Every high authority in the land has been sought to be brought into contempt. The Heir Presumptive to the throne, whose conduct deserves the admiration, as well as the gratitude, of all Protestants, has been most scandalously abused. From the reports in the papers, it appears that words have been uttered with respect to that exalted personage, which admit of the term constructive treason. The judges of the land, who are known for their attachment to the Protestant Constitution in Church and State, have not escaped without gross vituperation; and the dignitaries of the Church of the highest station, talent, and independence, are their never-ceasing subjects for obloquy and abuse. One family is the perpetual subject of attack, the head of which is the head of the Church Establishment in this city, (the Archbishop of Dublin,) a man not less remarkable for the accomplishments of his mind, than his powers as a Christian pastor; and he is marked out as the daily object of vituperation, simply for his attachment to the Protestant Establishment, without which we should not enjoy the possession of one rood of ground in this distracted country.

It has been urged, that the country is distracted, because the wishes of the people are not granted, and that they never will be content until those wishes are acceded to. Hard, indeed, would it be to find content or quiet in a land where the population are urged to sedition, through the violent and

inflammatory language of their heartless leaders, who care little for the ultimate success of the cause they profess to advocate, if they succeed in gratifying their own selfish ambition. They tell the Irish Roman Catholics they are slaves; I will tell them the same, and that they are slaves yoked to the chariots of their leaders: they are the veriest slaves that ever crouched at the wheels of their conquerors, or lent themselves as mere instruments for their wide-grasping ambition. I will, therefore, second the motion for a committee (to prepare a petition against the Roman Catholic claims); and trust that the Parliament will show that they cannot be acted upon by intimidation; that the Protestant body will support that Constitution which was won for us by the Glorious and Immortal WILLIAM; and that, in defiance of all Orders of liberators, we will go forth with our petition to the bar of the House, and prove our determination to support that religion which is a foe to slavery, and the foundation of which cast off the yoke which our ancestors were unable to bear.

S P E E C H

OF THE

REVEREND MR. HOGG,

A PRESBYTERIAN CLERGYMAN.

When the Protestant Nobility, Gentry, and Clergy assembled at Armagh, October 6th, 1826, the Meeting being also attended by a numerous Body of Presbyterians, with their Clergy, a Member of the latter, the late Moderator of the Synod of Ulster, the REV. MR. HOGG, thus addressed the Meeting.

MR. CHAIRMAN.—After the dazzling splendour of abilities already displayed, I feel extremely diffident in addressing this very respectable company; but I am constrained to

make the attempt by two motives. One of these motives is the honour just done me by coupling my name with the ancient and respectable Synod of Ulster. The other motive is to set the public right respecting the real sentiments of a very great majority (perhaps nine-tenths) of the people under the care of that Synod.

The Synod of Ulster, and the people under their care, are well known to be liberal; but whatever representations may be made, the great and general impulse of feeling in that portion of his Majesty's Protestant subjects is congenial with the present meeting. The ancestors and predecessors of the Synod of Ulster were so liberal as to reject all spiritual tyranny, all passive obedience both in religion and politics, and to rally round our great deliverer, WILLIAM of glorious memory, who, with his best ability and patient consideration, in conjunction with ministers from the Church of Scotland, matured that Ecclesiastical Establishment which the King is sworn to uphold, as well as the Establishments of England and Ireland. This was done at Loo, in the Low Countries, where King William found himself relieved from a perverse faction in England. This Establishment was, I think, unanimously accepted by the Scotch Parliament, and is the great pattern from which the old Presbyterian Church in Ireland copied its worship and church-government.

The Synod of Ulster is at present by far the greatest constituent part of the old Presbyterian Church in Ireland. But it is not to be supposed that the Synod of Ulster is not of a more ancient date than the glorious Revolution. It is nearly coeval with the Ulster plantation of James I., tracing its first settlement back so far as 1611. During fully forty years, it was incorporated, more or less, with the Protestant Prelatical Church of Ireland. In several instances, the prelates of that Church accommodated their ordinations so as to meet Presbyterian ideas, and give a title to tithes. This state of things continued until the interruption of our Constitution by Cromwell; but the liberality of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland did not then lead them so far as to dispense with so essential a part of the Constitution as the

Monarchy; and by their adherence to our happy Government by King, Lords, and Commons, they brought down the censure of the immortal poet Milton, in terms bordering nearly on scurrility; which may teach us a lesson of humility respecting the constitutional species of liberality possessed by the Synod of Ulster, and the greatest abilities, when blinded by party and faction.

Having said so much respecting the people under its care, I beg leave to add, that there is another species of liberality which we do not in general profess, notwithstanding the popular declamations made in a certain great commercial town (Belfast), leading to a supposition that we want to make dangerous experiments upon the vital principles of our Protestant Constitution. We want no such experiments; but the abettors of such would be glad to enlist on their side about one hundred thousand active and sensible men, under the care of the Synod of Ulster. With such a notion they may amuse themselves, but I appeal to facts. The man who immediately succeeded myself in the Moderatorship of the General Synod of Ulster, gave it as his opinion, upon oath before the Committee of the House of Lords, in the spring of the year 1825, that what I am saying is correct. And, moreover, this opinion of his was supported by the Synod which met in Coleraine that same year, where the then ex-Moderator supported his opinion and his conscientious evidence, as recorded in the minutes of the Synod, allowed by his Majesty's agent for the distribution of the Royal Bounty, and by a very respectable assembly of perhaps five thousand persons.

In opposition to those claims to constitutional feeling now made on behalf of the Synod of Ulster, it has been objected that such was not their character in the year 1798. But before we censure, let us consider the phrenzy with which the French Revolution had maddened the most civilized nations of Europe, even causing the old hereditary subjects of the illustrious House of Orange to banish that family; and then, perhaps, we shall not think it so strange that a few Presbyterian Ministers and their people should be engulfed by the same vortex. One minister and one probationary

only suffered the punishment of death ; a few transported themselves to the United States of America ; but it was declared that the Synod of Ulster was loyal as a body, and this declaration was believed by his late Majesty and his confidential servants, as appears by the additional independence imparted to its ministers by an increase of the Royal Bounty.

Another circumstance alleged to militate against my present statement respecting the feeling of the Synod of Ulster, is a certain declaration made in favour of Roman Catholic Emancipation (so called) by that Synod, as the Liberators say, in the year 1814. But in this, as in other things, such a declaration is incorrect. The declaration alluded to was made at the meeting of the Synod in the year 1813. I was present, and for the first time took a part in the Synod's debates. The declaration or overture alluded to was, by some management, got forward after its proper time, when the Synod was mostly dispersed, and only fourteen members remaining. Yet when this question was agitated, I divided the house, not for want of liberality, but upon the principle, that as a Synod, we had nothing to do with politics. I lost the majority by one vote ; and a protest by three or four was only prevented by the qualifying clause, "so far as may be consistent with the principles of the Constitution."

In conclusion, the liberality of the General Synod of Ulster causes them to behold the emoluments of the Established Church of Ireland without either grudge or envy, inasmuch as they consider these emoluments merely as civil appointments, nearly similar to the estates of the very respectable lay gentlemen whom I now address. According with the hint thrown out by my much-respected neighbour, (Dr. Miller,) I have no doubt that the Protestant Establishment of this part of the United Kingdom might effect an union with the Synod of Ulster upon certain principles and conditions, the basis of which, I apprehend, must be copied from the known experience of those former ages to which I have already alluded. I sincerely wish that this kind of relationship had never been interrupted ; in which wish I have the coincidence of the illustrious Usher. The liberality of the Synod of Ulster will also cause them to wish well from the

bottom of their hearts to their fellow-subjects of the Roman Catholic religion, in as far as relates to their bodies and outward estates; but we will outdo the most liberal liberators in promoting the interests of their immortal souls, until they reject all foreign dominion, and conform so far to the mode of the Protestant faith, as to join with their fellow-subjects in rallying like one man about a Protestant Throne, always filled according to the Act of Settlement by a descendant of the illustrious House of Hanover.

SPEECH

OF THE

REVEREND MR. KYD,

A PRESBYTERIAN CLERGYMAN.

At a Public Meeting held in the County of Derry, (Ireland,) which was attended by several thousand Protestants and Presbyterians, November 3d, 1826, for the purpose of petitioning against the Roman Catholic claims, the REV. MR. KYD, a Presbyterian Clergyman, thus addressed the assembly.

SIR.—It is, I confess, with reluctance, as a Minister of the Gospel, that I feel myself called upon to take any part in the proceedings of this day; but there are times and circumstances when silence would be criminal. The present is one of these. So long as the question before us was one of a purely political nature, it was right, it was proper, to leave it in the hands of statesmen alone: but it has now become a religious as well as a political question; and it becomes every one who is anxious for the well-being of the religion as well as the laws of the country, to take his part.

The violent opposition made to every endeavour to exalt the morals, and to improve the spiritual condition of those around us, has excited alarm, and justly excited alarm, in the minds of many. The open and undisguised hostility mani-

fested against Bible Societies and Education Societies, and every thing connected with them; the gross and calumnious abuse poured upon all who differ, however conscientiously, from these Societies; the cruel calumny which assails the living, and spares not the afflicted—nor even the memory of the sainted dead; that loads with the falsest and foulest aspersions such names as Calvin and Luther, Cranmer and Knox—names dear to every Christian heart, and cherished with the kindest feelings of every Christian bosom—these things have made many amongst that numerous and enlightened body of Protestants to which I belong—the Presbyterians of Ulster,—who heretofore might have been friendly to the claims of the Roman Catholics, become careless;—very many who might have been before careless, become open, decided, and conscientious opposers.

This opposition, Sir, is branded with the epithets of bigotry and uncharitableness. I, in the name of the thousands of Presbyterians assembled here this day, deny this charge. Amongst the arguments brought forward in proof of this, I shall only notice one, and that because it is the most specious and plausible. It is said, Sir, that whilst Protestants are admitted to the fullest participation in a State, the established religion of which is the religion of the Church of Rome, the members of that Church are excluded from an equal participation in a Protestant State. Admitting this, for argument's sake, which we do by no means really admit, we do say that the cases are by no means parallel, and there can follow no argument. Protestants, in whatever State they reside, admit of no foreign spiritual interference—they bow to no foreign spiritual power—they are not governed and guided by the edicts or the canons of men, but by the Word of God, delivered by prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone; and they have no temptation to be otherwise than faithful and attached to the State which affords them support and protection; but the members of the Church of Rome do owe a foreign spiritual domination—they do acknowledge a foreign spiritual interference—prostrate themselves before a foreign spiritual power, and that power be it remembered, one constitutionally

opposed to a Protestant Government; and a power, by virtue of his very office, bound and pledged to root out and destroy all who protest against his spiritual interference.

We repeat it, Sir, the cases are not parallel, and there can be no argument. To do away this objection, we are told that spiritual power is no power;—that it exercises no control over the minds or the conduct of men in a civil or political point of view. The contrary of this we do maintain—we do say, when exerted, it is the greatest of all power. The page of history, which we have carefully read, tells us this; and the passing events of the present day afford a striking and a warning comment on the fidelity of the page of history. We have seen the ties of affection and gratitude, the strong bonds even of our worldly interests burst and giving way before it; it has more than the power of the lever of Archimedes—give it but a place to rest on, and it would overturn the earth.

We would direct your attention to examples of suffering patience,—truly for conscience sake, worthy to be imitated; we would direct you to our Protestant Dissenting brethren in England, who are suffering grievous pains and penalties for conscience sake. We would direct your attention to the mild and gentle Society of Friends, who are every year suffering heavy pecuniary losses for conscience sake;—yet there are no clamours—no violence—no outcry here. Most solemnly do we declare, that we have no feelings of ill-will or of hostility to the members of the Church of Rome. So far as our humble means can go, we strive to relieve their temporal wants, and we earnestly desire their spiritual and eternal welfare. In all the churches within our communion, petitions are offered up to the King of Kings for their full and complete emancipation; for their being restored to the enjoyment of that birth-right which every being whom God has endowed with reason and understanding, should enjoy, the right of exercising their own judgment in matters of conscience and faith,—for their being restored to that privilege which all in a Christian land should have, the right of searching God's Word for themselves, unshackled and unrestrained by the comments and authority of men.

APPENDIX.

No. I.

EXTRACT FROM A SERMON

OF THE

REVEREND H. C. O'DONNOGHUE.

The following observations—being so appropriate and so important at this crisis—are extracted from a sermon preached Dec. 28, 1817, on the anniversary of Wickliffe's death, in the Parish Church of St. Mary, Whitechapel, and in the Chapel of the Alms-houses belonging to the Honourable Corporation of Trinity House, by the REVEREND H. C. O'DONNOGHUE, A. M. of St. John's College, Cambridge; Domestic Chaplain to the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Mount-Earl; Lecturer of St. Mary, Whitechapel; and Chaplain to the Honourable Corporation of Trinity House.

WHOEVER knows my general character, knows also that no man is more tolerant in his principles, or more tender of the prejudices of others. My motto and my maxim is, "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind." Yet with this indulgence to the partialities, and weaknesses, and even failings of others, I am not insensible of the evils of Popery, nor of that firm, yet moderate conduct incumbent on the Protestants of this empire. Were the errors of the Romish creed solely of a spiritual nature I should hesitate, with all my love of Protestant principles, to inflict temporal punishments or political disabilities, as judicial penalties on a mistaken or erring belief. Matters simply of conscience belong to a higher, and a more impartial tribunal than that of man's

judgment. Rome may boast, without fear of temporal coercion, restraint, or punishment, her exclusive claim to truth, infallibility, and supremacy; I heed not her arrogancy, nor tremble at the thunder of her indignant power. She may bind in the most galling and degrading fetters the natural freedom of the human will—blind the understanding—corrupt the heart—mislead the judgment, and degrade the characters of all whose credulity, and infatuation, and blindness, and weakness can bow in humble admiration of her mysteries and folly. Popery may lift herself up in bold opposition to the laws of God, and the truths of his Gospel. She may outrage common sense, and degrade the authority of the sacred volume—she may immure her votaries in the gloomy devotion of the cloisters, and load with the fetters of a blind superstition the mind which the Son of God would free. To all this enormity of guilt I would only oppose the sword of the Spirit, and the power of truth. But, when this corrupt Christianity would usurp the power of the sword, and meddle with the exclusive rights of the civil power,—when, in her busy, meddling policy, she would interfere in matters of civil government, controlling, or impeding, or disputing its paramount temporal authority—then acquiescence were criminal, and silence, treachery.

The universal sovereignty which Rome covets—the domineering influence she seeks to establish—the iron tyranny which she would exercise over the conscience and the obedience of the subjects of a Protestant nation must be opposed; unless we are prepared to surrender our freedom, our independence, and our religion to its arbitrary despotism, and to become the tributaries of a foreign power. “It has been demonstrated to me” (said Buonaparte in his address to the legislative body at Paris, in 1809,) “that the spiritual influence exercised in my state by a foreign sovereign, is contrary to the independence of France, to the safety and dignity of the throne.” The power claimed and exercised by the Court of Rome in independent States is totally irreconcilable with the hearty, full, unlimited, unsuspecting allegiance due

from every member of society to the government under which he lives.

It is on these considerations, and on these principles, that I ground my unceasing and unbending opposition to the claims of the Roman Catholics of this country to civil power. To free, unfettered religious toleration—to due protection of their persons, and their property,—they have an equal right with their Protestant fellow-citizens; but, until they can give the same pledge, and the same security for their obedience, and temperate, impartial, and legitimate exercise of power, I would conscientiously withhold its grant.

Nor let it be supposed that the fears which Protestants entertain of an abuse of power, or of arbitrary principles of government are speculative or visionary. Far otherwise: the records of history abundantly testify that Bellarmine's claim, "that the Pope has a most full power over the whole Church, both in ecclesiastical and civil things," is neither dormant nor harmless. He who has impiously been styled "King of Kings," and declared to be possessed of "power above all powers, both of heaven and earth," has too often practically shown that he deems independent states and powers as tributary to his power, and subject to his rule. Nor, for a moment, let us be deluded by the supposition that the spirit of moderation which so generally prevails among Protestants, has operated on the prejudices and opinions of Popery;—and imparted to her a kindlier feeling towards others. She is unchanged and unchangeable. Policy and prudence may repress the full expression of her sentiments, and dictate a moderation in appearance which her soul abhors—her laity may by collision and intercourse with their fellow-subjects have lost much of the asperity and bitterness of bigotry. But, separated from all the endearments of domestic life, strangers to the kind feelings of intimate relationship, the Priesthood subsists in all its original prejudice and power. That prejudice proclaims all without its own circle as heretics, and as the devoted victims of unbelief:—and that power, which exercises dominion over the temporal and eternal destinies of its votaries, which can wield, at will, the mighty

influence of penance, absolution, and purgatory—has been too often used as the engine of oppression, and as the instigator of crime and rebellion.

Tell me not that the time of such influence and tyranny is past. Even now the natural freedom of the human will bows with blind submission and slavish humiliation, before the magic influence of priestly domination. Hers is, indeed, an iron bondage—degrading, afflicting, fatal. In the *general* good sense and good feeling of my Roman Catholic fellow-subjects I would repose confidence, and even power. But, when I contemplate their slavish subserviency and devoted attachment to their spiritual masters—when I call to mind the policy, by which their Priesthood is governed,—and the dark intrigues of Jesuitical cunning by which it is distinguished; when I recollect the plots they have hatched, the discontent they have fostered, the rebellions they have planned; when, to all this, I add that the same spirit and the same principles, and the same object, are cherished and pursued by the present ministers of this corrupt church, I must hesitate to confer that influence, and to strengthen that power which, however meekly used at first, may, not improbably, at last, be employed to subvert the government, and to overwhelm the generosity that, in blind and mistaken confidence, conferred them. For, never let us forget that the good of the Church is, in the estimation of Papists, so paramount a consideration and object, that it sanctifies every act by which it is promoted. Deep as are the crimes which history records on this subject, the motive is considered sufficient to wipe away their guilt, and to efface their stain. The tremendous power of the Priesthood, wielding the terrors of the unseen world, is the disgrace and curse of this religion!

Considerations of self-defence—attachment to that Establishment, whose benign and tolerant spirit conciliates respect, and allays animosity—regard for the prosperity and welfare of our native land—and, above all, a recollection of the dark deeds of Popery in her career of uncontrolled power—ALL teach us to regard her professions with distrust, and her claims with fear.

That the Roman Catholic population of Ireland require, nay by their very misery and depression, demand, some amelioration is readily conceded. But, let me seriously ask in what respects Roman Catholic emancipation, as it is termed, would effect any beneficial change in *their* condition. Were all the honours and offices which his Majesty has to bestow conferred on professors of the Roman Catholic religion, the misery, poverty, and ignorance of the Irish peasantry would still remain unmitigated and unredeemed. Roman Catholic emancipation is a text from which the restless spirits of Irish Roman Catholic orators may take occasion to deliver bold and disloyal speeches;—it may serve as a pretext for fomenting the public mind, and endangering the public peace. But, from my heart, I believe that those Roman Catholic orators would deeply regret the success of their own professed wishes—for there would then remain to them, no theme for exciting public attention, or agitating the national passions.

That emancipation will force itself on the minds of men, I firmly believe: but it is an emancipation from ignorance, and vice, and spiritual domination, and not from civil disabilities. The progress of education and truth is slowly, but surely, undermining the cause of Popery. To what event the full developement of this fact will be indebted, no human prudence or foresight can predict;—but of the fact itself there can be no doubt. Truth may be slow, but it is sure in its progress. Entertaining these sentiments, I withhold not their full expression; but deeply should I regret were they to be misconstrued into unkind or uncharitable feelings towards the Roman Catholics themselves. I oppose myself not to the persons, but to the opinions of mankind. To the professors of Popery, generally, I give my heart, my sympathy, and my prayers;—to their factious, intemperate, and disloyal orators I promise an unbending opposition, and a bold exposure:—not, however, unmingled with my earnest prayer that God would, in his great mercies, discover to them the error of their ways, and put into their hearts his most excellent gift of charity, and bring them into his most holy truth.

No. II.

Papal Encroachments and Papal Jurisdiction.

THE most authentic historical records indubitably demonstrate, that six centuries elapsed before the Church of Rome had any footing in this country. The first missionaries established themselves in Britain by the favour and patronage of Saxon princes. But, that the Anglo-Saxon Churches differed from the Church of Rome is manifest, from the objections of the former to image-worship and the invocation of saints, to transubstantiation, and other errors. It was not until the twelfth century that the Pope's jurisdiction was established in this country; and continued (but not without frequent opposition and restrictions by the King and Parliament, from the 35th Edward I. to the 25th Henry VIII.)*) till the beginning of the sixteenth century. At that epoch occurred the ever-memorable REFORMATION, which abolished the intrusive jurisdiction of the Pope, and restored to the Crown, the sovereignty over the state ecclesiastical, and to the Church of England its ancient rights and independence.

The long series of statutes† against the papal encroachments enacted prior to the Reformation, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, is of great importance in distinguishing the *political danger* of Popery from the religious corruptions of the Church of Rome, and in showing that the Church of England's rejection of Popery at the Reformation, did not originate with Luther, or in the sensualities of Henry VIII. (as the Roman Catholics pretend,) but was the ultimate result of the national abhorrence of a foreign jurisdiction. To Black-

* 35 Edward I. 25, 27, 28 Edward III. 3, 7, 12, 13 Richard II. 2, 7 Henry IV. 3 Henry V. 32 Henry VI. 7 Edward IV. 10 Henry VII. 24, 25 Henry VIII.

† "In the writs for the execution of all these statutes the words *præmunire facias*, being (as we said) used to command a citation of the party, have denominated, in common speech, not only the writ, but the offence itself of *maintaining the Papal power*, by the name of *præmunire*. This then is the original meaning of the offence, which we call *præmunire*, viz. *introducing a foreign power into this land*, and creating *imperium in imperio*, by paying that obedience to Papal process, which constitutionally belonged to the King alone, long before the Reformation in the reign of Henry VIII."—*Blackstone's Commentaries*, lib. iv. cap. 8.

stone's observations on this subject, may be added Mr. G. Sharp's valuable Appendix to his Remarks on the Irish Roman Catholic Catechism, containing an enumeration of the several statutes from 35 Edward I. to 1 Henry V. "These national statutes," he observes, speaking of four in 38 Edward III. "are evidences of the most extraordinary and undeniable importance, when we consider that they were enacted above one hundred and eighty years *before the Church of England was reformed* under King Edward VI.; so that the advocates for Popery cannot reasonably attribute them to religious prejudices against their corrupted Church."

In the Preface to the same Remarks, Mr. Sharp has directed the attention of the public to the frauds employed to introduce the papal jurisdiction into England, frauds equalled only by the forgeries of the Decretals and of the Donation of Constantine. "Through the influence of a *foreign Power* some pretended statutes obtained the force and power of *law* in England, though they were enacted and ordained only 'by the King and his Council,' at the time of each enactment, without the least mention of the consent of the Parliament, or of the Common Council of the Kingdom, and which seem, therefore, to have been mere *orders in Council*, though artfully dated '*At the Parliament*,' in order to give them the appearance of law. The learned Sir Edward Coke, gives several instances of such *supposed* statutes, that had been repealed or *disaffirmed*, (wanting the consent of the Commons) which were, nevertheless, published and enforced as real statutes; viz. 5 Richard II. cap. 5. and 2 Henry IV. cap. 15. and again the 2 Henry V. cap. 7. all which, as Sir Edward Coke remarks, were *disavowed by the Commons*, and (yet) the pretended Acts were printed (4 Inst. p. 51. and 3 Inst. p. 40, 41.) But when we consider *the purposes* for which these notorious frauds were committed by the three English kings* above mentioned, and their ministers—that they were really to support and enforce the anti-christian doctrines of the *Papal Government at Rome*, they demonstrate the extreme danger of granting any share of *political* government to persons who submit their *religious* opinions to the *dictates* of that fatal foreign power.

"One of the purposes of the *first* mentioned statute (that of 5

* We may justly exonerate the three kings from the blame here imputed to them, for measures, of which their Popish prelates and Popish clergy were the real authors. But we certainly derive from these *pretended* statutes an invincible argument against the admission of Papists to offices of political trust and power.

Richard II.) as stated by Sir Edward Coke, 3 Inst. p. 40, was that— ‘ By colour of this supposed act, certain persons that held—*that images were not to be worshipped*, &c. were holden in strong prison until they (to redeem their vexation) miserably yielded before those masters of divinity to take oath, and did *swear to worship images*, which was against the moral and eternal law of Almighty God.’ The purpose of the *second* illegal statute above mentioned, (viz. 2 Henry IV. cap. 15.) was against persons whom they were pleased to call *heretics*— ‘ giving power to the bishop or ordinary to convent before him, or imprison any person suspected of heresy,’ and ordaining (contrary to the laws of God) that an obstinate heretic (or any person whom an ignorant Popish enthusiast was pleased to call so,) ‘ shall be *burned* before the people!’ The purpose of the *third* illegal statute (2 Henry V. cap. 7.) was equally *diabolical*, viz. ‘ That all the officers of government shall be sworn to assist the ordinaries in *extirpating heresies*.’ (The condemnation of a heretic to be extirpated was well known by the ordinary process of execution at that time, to mean extirpation by fire, exactly in the style of old Babylon.) ‘ That an heretic convict shall forfeit all his fee-simple lands, goods, chattels, and they which be indicted of heresy shall be delivered to the ordinaries,’ i. e. for an inquisitorial trial, and consequent ‘ extirpation in flames of fire.’

“ By such notorious treachery and dishonesty in forging statutes, did the zealots of the Roman Church introduce the Papal tyranny and cruelty into England, which circumstances amply prove the extreme danger of entrusting any persons with a share of *political* power, whose *religious* opinions are subject to such a fatal *foreign influence*.”
(Preface to *Remarks on the Irish Roman Catholic Catechism*.)

No III.

Ancient Religion of Ireland—Pope Adrian's Bull.

SINCE the glorious sun of a new Reformation, at present beams its pellucid rays among the long-deluded Roman Catholics of Ireland, it cannot but be deemed expedient, nay necessary, to insert here the following concise dissertation respecting the ancient religion of Ireland, with a translation of Pope Adrian's Bull, which commissioned Henry II. to introduce and establish the Roman Catholic system in that kingdom. Both these documents are transcribed from the valuable and truly "Protestant Catechism" of the Right Reverend DR. BURGESS, Lord Bishop of Salisbury, (late of St. David's). They merit an attentive perusal, especially at this crisis, when the advocates of Roman Catholic pretensions unblushingly assert, that the ancient religion of Ireland was Popery. These documents—one of which is most potent in its nature, as emanating from the See of Rome—clearly disclaim and contradict the assertions. Besides, they tend to prove, that the ancient religion of Ireland coincided with that of England, and that both were united at an early period.

The Bull of Pope Adrian IV. in which he gives his consent to Henry the Second's conquest of Ireland, on condition of his paying Peterpence, is a curious and important historical document, and contains indisputable evidence, that Popery* was *not the ancient religion* of the Irish—*not the religion of Ireland* before the middle of the twelfth century. If this fact, *the modern introduction of Popery* into Ireland, were more generally known in that country, it might tend not a little to break that spell, which blinds the eyes of the Irish Papists to the errors of the Church of Rome. "I confess," says Archbishop Usher in his Letter to Sir Christopher Sibthorp, "I somewhat incline to be of your mind, that if, under the authorities drawn out of Scriptures and fathers, (which are common to us with others) a true discovery were added of that religion, which *anciently* was professed in this kingdom, it might prove a special motive to induce my poor countrymen to consider a little better of the old and true way, from whence they have hitherto been misled." And what was that old and true way? The Archbishop says, "As far as I can collect by such records of the former ages as have come unto my hands, (either manuscript or printed,) the religion professed by the *ancient* bishops,

* Popery is not merely the worship of Saints, and of the Mass, and the belief in Transubstantiation, Purgatory, &c. but submission to the jurisdiction of the Pope.

priests, monks, and other christians in this land, was for substance the very same with that, which now by public authority is maintained therein against the *foreign doctrine* brought in thither in *latter times* by the Bishop of Rome's followers." This the primate has abundantly proved in the six first chapters of his "Discourse on the Religion *anciently* professed by the Irish and British." In the subsequent chapters he discusses the Pope's "spiritual jurisdiction, and shows how little footing it had at first in these parts." But to return to Pope Adrian's Bull.

The Archbishop considers the *general* claim, which in this bull the Pope made to Ireland, on the ground that Ireland, and all other islands into which Christianity had been introduced, belonged of right to St. Peter,* and to the Church of Rome, to be a proof, that he had no other claim, and that the island had not been subject to him previously to his compact with Henry II.

Mr. Roberts also, in his valuable and interesting Review of the Policy and peculiar Doctrines of the Church of Rome, (p. 106, 107.) notices the *address* being to the King instead of the clergy;—and the expressions of Henry's *planting* Christianity in Ireland, and thus *extending the limits* of the Church, as evidences to the same purpose.

Bale, indeed, informs us, that Adrian had condemned the Irish for *heresy*; and that their heresy was the reason of his entering into compact with Henry for the occupation of the country. We have in that fact alone sufficient proof that Ireland was not *then* within the pale of the Church of Rome. This charge of heresy was also asserted by Harding in his Chronicle a century before Bale's time; and is confirmed by a contemporary writer, Giraldus Cambrensis, in his character of the Irish; and by the provisions of the council of Cashel in 1172. The imputed *heresy* was the heresy of discipline rather than of doctrine; but it equally shows the non-conformity of *the ancient Irish Church* to the Church of Rome.

But even without these evidences of their non-conformity, it is clear from the language of the Bull, that Ireland was not subject to the Pope at the time of this celebrated compromise. For, if Ireland had *then* been within the jurisdiction of the Pope, he never would have spoken of Christianity as *planted* there by Henry, nor of the *limits* of the Church being *enlarged* by him. Of this planting, too, and enlargement he speaks as the *intention* of the King, not yet done,

* By the donation of Constantine; of which "notorious forgery," see *Usher's Discourse*, p. 118; *Geddes's Tracts*, vol. iv. p. 1—52; *Bower's History of the Popes*, vol. i. p. 111.

but *to be done*. He mentions also his *adding* Ireland to the number of islands subject to St. Peter and the Church of Rome *in consequence* of Henry's proposal, and the good purposes professed by him. He likewise describes the Irish as *untaught* and *ignorant of the Christian faith*, which he might do as a Pope, judging them to be *heretics*, but which he would not have done, if they had been *Roman Catholics*. We have, therefore, for the *modern establishment* of Popery in Ireland, the authority of a Pope, the very Pope, who was instrumental in that establishment. The present race of Irish Roman Catholics call Popery *the ancient religion of Ireland*. They may learn from Adrian's Bull, that Popery has no such claim to their veneration. They may learn, too, what, perhaps, will not increase their veneration for Popery, that its establishment in Ireland was the work of two Englishmen,—an English Pope,* and an English King.

The original text of the Pope's Bull may be seen in Giraldus Cambrensis's Tracts *de Expugnat. Hibern.* and *De rebus a se gestis*, Matt. Paris, &c. There is a translation of it in Rapin's History of England, Collyer's Eccles. History of Great Britain, Leland's History of Ireland, Lord Lyttleton's History of Henry II., Roberts's Review of the Policy and peculiar Doctrines of the Church of Rome, Chalmers's Life of Adrian IV. in the Biographical Dictionary. For the translation here subjoined, the Postscript of Dr. Burgess is answerable.

Pope Adrian's Bull.

“ADRIAN, Bishop, servant of the servants of God, to our well-beloved Son in Christ, the illustrious King of England, health and Apostolical benediction.

“Your Highness's desire of extending the glory of your name on earth, and of obtaining the reward of eternal happiness in heaven, is laudable and beneficial; inasmuch as your intent is, as a Catholic Prince, to *enlarge the limits of the Church*, to declare the truth of the Christian faith to *untaught and rude nations*, and to eradicate vice from the field of the Lord. For the more convenient execution of this design you require the counsel and favour of the Apostolic See. In this undertaking we are confident, that, with the blessing of the Lord, you will have the happier success in proportion to the excel-

* Adrian was a native of Langley, near St. Albans in Hertfordshire. (Chalmers's Biographical Dictionary.) A third Englishman was the main agent in this nefarious transaction,—John of Salisbury,—who says it was at his request, that the Pope consented to the invasion of Ireland.

lence of your motive, and the greatness of your discretion, with which you proceed in it, because those undertakings are usually attended with a larger share of success, which originate in the ardour of faith, and the love of religion. There is, indeed, no doubt, that Ireland and all the islands which the Sun of righteousness has enlightened, and which have received the doctrines of Christianity, belong to the jurisdiction of St. Peter, and of the Holy Roman Catholic Church, as your Highness acknowledges. We have, therefore, the more willingly inserted among them a faithful *plant*, and a *graft* acceptable to God, because, after mature examination, we distinctly *foresee* that *it ought to be done*. Since, then, most dearly beloved Son in Christ, you have signified to us, that you intend your expedition to Ireland in order to subject the people to laws, and to *extirpate vice*; and that you are willing to pay to St. Peter an annual pension of one penny from every house, and to preserve the rights of the churches of that land inviolate and entire; we, therefore, approving, as it deserves, your pious and laudable design, and giving our hearty assent to your petition, are well pleased, that you should make a descent on that island in order to *enlarge the limits of the Church, to repress the progress of vice, to correct the manners of the people, to implant virtue, to increase the knowledge of Christianity*; and that you may execute whatever may conduce to the honour of God, and to the salvation of the people. May the people receive you honourably, and venerate you as their lord, provided, that, on your part, the rights of the churches be preserved inviolate and entire; and the annual pension of one penny from every house be paid to St. Peter, and to the holy Roman Church. If then you determine to put your design in execution, study to improve the nation in virtue, and do all that in you lies, (as well as by the aid of such persons as you may judge to be qualified for this purpose by their faith, their doctrine, and life) for the honour of the Church, for the *planting* and *growth* of the Christian faith; and that all things pertaining to the glory of God, and the salvation of souls, may be so regulated by you, as to entitle you to receive an eternal reward from God, and immortal renown on earth."

John of Salisbury who negotiated the compact between the King and the Pope, rests the Pope's pretended right to the sovereignty of Ireland, on the donation of Constantine. But he does it with some hesitation. "All islands" (he says) "of ancient right, are said to belong to the Church of Rome by the donation of Constantine." He was too learned and sagacious a writer not to be aware of the forgery of this imperial edict. Laurentius Valla, Baronius, and other learned

Papists acknowledge it to be a forgery. Yet this surreptitious donation was the foundation of all the Pope's temporal power. Under its sanctions the Pope claimed the right of conferring the sovereignty of Ireland on Henry II. At the time of the *Reformation*, the right thus conveyed was thought by the Papists to be still inherent in the Pope. It was unknown or forgotten, that, if the Pope had ever possessed the right, he had conveyed it away to the King and his heirs for ever; *jure hæreditaria possidendam*, says John of Salisbury, who says that it was at his request, (*ad preces meas*) that the Pope granted it to Henry. It was also forgotten that the King acquired a much better right in the submission not only of the whole body of the Irish clergy, but of the kings and princes of Ireland, who received him as their "Lord and King," and the nation a much surer means of civilization and protection by their participation of the English laws and government than the sovereignty of the Pope could afford them. "Ireland" (says Leland speaking of the era of the Reformation) "had been for ages considered, and industriously represented, as a *fief of the Pope*, in right of the Church of Rome. By virtue of this imaginary right, the seigniorship of the kingdom, it was well known, had been conferred on Henry II."* Elsewhere, Leland also observes, "one cannot seriously reflect on the profane hypocrisy of this transaction without the utmost horror. Little did Henry foresee, in the blindness of his ambition, the perplexity he was to experience from that power he now contributed to aggrandize, or the heavy weight of oppression with which it was to fall upon his own head. A Bull was framed without delay, fully conformable to the wishes and purposes of the King. It is here inserted at large, and affords a shocking instance of the profligacy and impiety of Papal usurpation."—*Leland's History of Ireland*, vol. i. p. 5—8.

* *History of Ireland*, vol. ii. p. 160. 4to. ed.

No. IV.

Oath of a Roman Catholic Bishop.

WHEN DR. CURTIS, the titular Roman Catholic Primate in Ireland was examined before the Committee of the House of Lords, respecting the oath taken by bishops of his communion, before their consecration, he stated, "it is not an oath of allegiance; it is there called *an oath of fidelity*,* and that is merely to distinguish it, because it is taken to a *higher personage*; but it means nothing more than canonical obedience,† the obedience which the canons of the Church or general councils require to be paid to the Pope as head of the Church." Dr Curtis then delivered in a paper containing a copy of the oath, which was read, and is as follows.

A COPY.

"At an audience of his Holiness, held on the 9th day of June, 1791.

"The archbishops of the kingdom of Ireland have explained to our most holy Lord, that through the ignorance or dishonesty‡ of some

* The testimony of the witness, that in the language of the Roman court, the bishop's oath is styled an *oath of fidelity*, deserves much attention. "When any one," says the angelical doctor St. Thomas, "is denounced as excommunicated for apostacy, his subjects are, by the fact, absolved from his dominion, and from their oath of fealty (*juramento fidelitatis*) to him." *Th. 2. Secund. qu. 12. art. 2.*—Pope Sixtus V. in his Bull against Henry, King of Navarre and the Prince of Condé, says, "By the authority of these presents, we do absolve and set free all persons, as well jointly as severally, from any such oath, and from all duty whatsoever in respect of dominion, fealty (*fidelitatis*) and obedience," Pope Clement V. in the council of Vienna, says of the Emperor's oath to him, "By apostolical authority, and with the advice of our brethren, we declare that the oaths aforesaid, are, and ought to be reputed, oaths of fealty (*fidelitatis*)." *Clementin. lib. 2. tit. 9.* Could the Pope and council have meant that the Emperor had taken an oath of *canonical obedience*?—*Digest of Evidence on Ireland*, part ii. p. 7.

† It is a matter of historical notoriety, and acknowledged by the most learned Roman Catholic divines, that several ages elapsed before any oath was taken to the Bishop of Rome, and that those first in use were of a very different character from the present. "In the beginning," says Father Walsh in his *Defence of the Church of Rome* against the Bishop of Lincoln, "there was no such oath or any other, nor any promise of fidelity or obedience made by the bishops to the Pope, but only a bare profession of the common faith, even such as he also made to them by his Encyclical letters; and afterwards, when promises began, they were *only of canonical obedience* in general terms."

‡ The prelates who made this application to Rome, would have consulted better for their own reputation by forbearing to ascribe ignorance or dishonesty to those who put an unfavourable construction on the words in question. They are as follows:—*Hereticos, schismaticos, et rebelles eidem Domino nostro, pro posse persequar et impugnabo.*

persons, certain words found in the form of oath, which according to the Roman ritual, is to be taken by archbishops and bishops, are perverted into a strange sense; and that in addition to those difficulties which must occur every day in a kingdom were the *Catholic religion has not the dominion*, they are on this account thrown into new perplexities, whence they humbly beg, that, as far as may seem expedient to his Holiness, he would, in his apostolical wisdom, provide some means of delivering them. Accordingly, his Holiness, having, at the instance of the undersigned, maturely considered all things, has graciously given indulgence, that the Irish archbishops and bishops may use the form of oath, which, by the permission of his said Holiness, the archbishop of Mohilow,* in the empire of Russia, has taken. This oath is as follows.

“ I. N. elect, of the Church of N., from henceforward will be faithful and obedient to St. Peter the Apostle, and to the *holy* Roman Church, and to our lord, *the lord* N. Pope N., and to his successors canonically coming in.† I will neither advise, *consent*, or do anything that they may lose life or member, or that their persons may be seized, or *hands any-wise laid upon them, or any injuries offered to them under any pretence whatsoever*. The counsel which they shall intrust me withal, by themselves, *their messengers*, or letters, I will not *knowingly* reveal to any to their prejudice. I will help them to defend and keep the Roman Papacy, AND THE ROYALTIES OF ST. PETER, saving my order, against all men. The legate of the Apostolic See, going and coming, I will honourably treat and help in his necessities. *The rights, honours, privileges, and authority of the holy*

* “ In the year 1785, a Roman Catholic ecclesiastic of Russia, when taking the oath at his consecration as archbishop of Mohilow, stopt at the clause which enjoined the persecution of heretics, and refused to recite it. The ceremony was broken off, and information sent to the Pope; but as the archbishop elect acted with the concurrence of his sovereign (the Empress Catherine) and could not be shaken from his purpose, the Court of Rome was compelled to yield; and the clause was omitted. Ireland was at that time convulsed by religious feuds, almost as violently as at the present day; and when the account of this Russian transaction arrived there, it attracted much notice. In the end, the titular hierarchy found it expedient to apply to Rome, for a similar change in their oath.”—*Digest of Evidence on Ireland*. p. 9.

† The passages in the usual type form the oath of fidelity which was first substituted for that of canonical obedience. It was drawn up by the famous Pope Gregory VII., and introduced into England by Anselm and Thomas à Becket, both of whom as well as Gregory, are saints in the Roman calendar; but it was not used in Ireland, (according to O’Conner) outside the limits of the pale, until the reign of Queen Elizabeth. The clauses in italics, down to the last sentence, appear to have been added at the Reformation; they do not occur in copies of the oath of so late a date as the year 1508; (preserved by Dr. Burke in his *Hibernia Dominicana*.) but they are found, with the exception of the details of the visit to Rome, in the oath laid before the English Commons in 1532, by order of King Henry VIII.

Roman Church, of our lord the Pope, and his aforesaid successors, I will endeavour to preserve, defend, increase, and advance. I will not be in any council, action, or treaty, in which shall be plotted against our said lord, and the said Roman Church, any thing to the hurt or prejudice of their persons, right, honour, state, or power; and if I shall know any such thing to be treated or agitated by any whatsoever, I will hinder it to my power, and as soon as I can, will signify it to our said lord, or to some other by whom it may come to his knowledge. The rules of the holy fathers, the apostolic decrees, ordinances, or disposals, reservations, provisions, and mandates I will observe with all my might, and cause to be observed by others. I will come to a council when I am called, unless I be hindered by canonical impediment. I will, by myself in person, visit the threshold of the Apostles every TEN years; and give an account to our lord and his foresaid successors of all my pastoral office, and of all things any-wise belonging to the state of my church, to the discipline of my clergy and people, and lastly, to the salvation of souls committed to my trust; and will in like manner, humbly receive and diligently execute the apostolic commands. And if I be detained by a lawful impediment, I will perform all the things aforesaid, by a certain messenger hereto specially empowered, a member of my chapter, or some other in ecclesiastical dignity, or else having a parsonage, or in default of these, by a priest of the diocese; or in default of one of the clergy (of the diocese) by some other secular or regular priest of approved integrity and religion, fully instructed in all things above mentioned. And such impediment I will make out by lawful proofs, to be transmitted by the foresaid messenger, to the Cardinal Proponent of the holy Roman Church in the congregation of the sacred Council. The possessions belonging to my table I will neither sell nor give away, nor mortgage, nor grant anew in fee, nor anywise alienate, no not even with the consent of the chapter of my Church, without consulting the Roman Pontiff. All and every of these things I will observe the more inviolably, as being certain that nothing is contained in them which can interfere with the fidelity I owe to the most serene King of Great Britain and Ireland, and his successors to the throne. So help me God, &c."

The Rev. M. O'Sullivan was asked before the Commons' Committee, (p. 460) "Do you conceive that the obedience that is due to the Pope is limited by the canons?—*The Pope is the person to judge of the meaning of canons; the Pope is to hear causes. If a bishop be accused of a grave charge, he is brought to trial by the Pope, who has in consequence the power of judging what the canons mean; and*

besides, I should observe, that in the Church of Rome, it is not as in our Church, in which we have a certain number of canons, and can easily see, by looking at the prayer-book, what the canons are. In the Roman Catholic Church it is impossible to know what is the number of canons enforced, from the early periods to the present. Some are denied, and some admitted ; it is an opinion held, by many of the writers of the Church of Rome, that if the Pope gives his sanction to any council whatever, it from the moment acquires the authority of a general council. Baronius adduces the case of the fifth general council ; it was the second of Constantinople, and was at first denied to be general. It had not, as Baronius affirms, the authority even of a provincial council, and a Pope, I believe, Vigilius, undertook to express a similar opinion ; but afterwards, from the time when it received confirmation from another Pope, it became a general council : therefore, I consider that the Pope can at any time affix his own interpretation on the canons,* or revive into operation canons, which may now be called obsolete ; and by his assent to them, make them canons of the Church."

His Grace the *Archbishop of Dublin* was asked before the Lords' Committee, (p. 688) "If the belief that the sovereign is an heretic is likely to shake the obedience of a Roman Catholic to a Protestant sovereign, is not the belief that the sovereign is an idolater, equally liable to shake the allegiance of the Protestant ?—*A.* I think not : it does not appear to me that the sovereign being an idolater, or being personally of any other description whatsoever, can affect the allegiance of Protestants professionally, as growing out of their particular religion. Their religion gives no new object for allegiance ; they are not bound to any other supremacy ; their allegiance, whatever it is, is undivided. *The Protestant takes no oath of allegiance but to his king.* On the other hand, I am not able to explain to myself, how the heads of the Roman Catholic Church under a Protestant king, can consistently preserve the oath of allegiance to the sovereign. *I find myself unable to reconcile that most solemn oath that is taken upon the appointment of a Roman Catholic bishop, with his allegiance to the sovereign.* It appears to me, that there is an obligation as deep as that which can grow out of the feeling of Christianity at war with the civil obligation. I can find in this oath, no reservation or cir-

* "Dr. Doyle says that they are the canons of the particular national churches to which each bishop belongs ; Dr. Curtis, on the contrary, deposes that they are the canons of the *Church*, (that is, the Universal Roman Catholic Church,) and of general councils ; Dr. Murray and Kelly speak of them loosely as *the canons.*"—*Digest of Evidence on Ireland*, p. 3.

cumscription whatsoever ; and, therefore, looking to a case of mere temporal concerns solely, and supposing the possibility of a war between this country and the states of the Pope, unless there be some dispensing power affecting the obligation of this oath, or something be specifically and openly announced, to qualify the oath of allegiance to the sovereign, I do not see how both oaths can be safely taken by the same persons. *The individual who takes this oath, appears to me to be bound to communicate to the Pope every secret of his sovereign, that it may be necessary for the Pope's safety to know, and to be in like manner bound to conceal every design communicated to him on the part of the Pope, which it might be injurious to the Pope that his sovereign should know, and which, by his oath of allegiance, considered in itself, he would be bound to make known to his sovereign. It seems also to go to this, that if the sovereign of this country were engaged in a war with any state on which the papal rights, or the privileges of the Roman Catholic See mainly depended, he would be bound to act in like manner, and to make and to withhold the same communications as in the case in which the Pope was the party immediately concerned. Thus, then, the bishop seems bound by an oath, which interferes indirectly with his oath of allegiance to his sovereign, when the interests of the Pope and those of the sovereign come into collision ; and when the giving the support of a loyal subject to his prince, would be vitally injurious to the Pope. If this disturbing influence exerted on the bishop, be carried down through the priest, either from the nature of his oath, or any other way, it must be unnecessary to say, from the close and influential contact into which every officiating priest is brought with the Roman Catholic population of the country, what the effect must be as to the general loyalty."*

No. V.

Oath of a Roman Catholic Priest.

DR. DOYLE in his examination before the Lords' Committee was asked, (p. 236) "Are there any oaths taken by the Roman Catholic priests in Ireland to the State at present?—*All those educated at Maynooth* are obliged, on their entering the college, to *take the oath of* allegiance prescribed to be taken by Roman Catholics. Are all the persons appointed to be parish priests in Ireland now educated at Maynooth ?

—No—far from it. Then, if a person is not educated at Maynooth, he is not obliged to take the oath of allegiance?—Not unless he succeeds to some property, or is appointed to some office requiring it. *I never took the oath of allegiance in this country, until about a year ago, and probably should not have then done so, had I not been appointed to some situation.*”

The Rev. THOMAS W. DIXON, in his examination before the Lords' Committee, was asked, (p. 800) “Were you educated for holy orders in the Roman Catholic Church?—I was. Where?—At the College of Maynooth. *Is there any oath in which obedience to the Pope is expressed?—There is.*”

The Rev. W. PHELAN being examined before the Lords' Committee, was asked, (p. 419) “Has it occurred to you, that there are any observations on the tendency of the oath of the Roman Catholic priest?—The only part of the oath which I suppose your lordships could think worthy of considering, is the concluding paragraph, as follows:—‘*I acknowledge the holy Catholic and Apostolic Church of Rome as the mother and mistress of all churches; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman Pontiff, the successor of Peter, and Vicar of Jesus Christ; and all things defined, delivered, and declared by the holy canons and general councils, and especially by the council of Trent, I do unhesitatingly receive and confess: and likewise I condemn and reject all things contrary thereto. This is the true faith, out of which there is no salvation: I will keep it firmly to my life's end, and will take care that it be kept by my subjects, and those of whom I may have charge. So help me God, and these holy gospels.*’ This paragraph appears to me to contain matter deserving of attention.

“In what respects do you think that latter part of the oath is of any practical importance?—There are two points in it which deserve to be considered, the one, a declaration that the Pope is the Vicar or Vicegerent of Christ, and the other, a pledge that *the priest will maintain all the canons, and cause them to be maintained by all with whom he may have authority.* Each of these declarations contains, I think, matter objectionable to every Protestant government; perhaps to all States, but more especially to Protestant States.

“State what you conceive to be objectionable in each of them?—In the times when the power of the papacy was at its height, the expression, ‘the Vicar of Christ,’* had a very extended meaning indeed.

* This arrogant title was not assumed by the Popes until the close of the twelfth century: the Pontiffs previously were simply Vicars of Peter, but having introduced a maxim, that whatever was given to the Church was given to God, and be-

It would be unnecessary to occupy your lordships' time in pointing out how the prophecies of the Old Testament and the Epistles of the New, combine to show, that our Lord, since his ascension, is not only the High Priest, but the King of the whole Christian world. It is certain that his regal, as well as sacerdotal character, is described in the Scriptures ; and, therefore, it would appear, that unless there were some qualifications annexed to the expression, ' Vicar of Christ,' a regal as well as sacerdotal vicegerency was asserted. Now, I can show your lordships, that in early times, *a regal as well as a sacerdotal power was expressly claimed under this title* ; and subsequently there has been no authoritative restriction of its import. Pope Innocent the Third declares the two powers in these words:—' In token of spirituals, she (the Church) gave me a mitre, *in token of temporals, a crown ; a mitre for priestly power, a crown for regal ; constituting me his Vicar*, who hath written on his garment and on his thigh, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, and a Priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.' I can quote similar references, if it be the pleasure of your lordships. One is from the famous Bull, ' Unam Sanctam,' by Boniface the Eighth. It states, ' We are compelled by the faith to hold *one* holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church ; and we firmly believe and plainly confess this (Church,) *out of which there is neither salvation nor remission of sins*. Therefore, of the one and only Church, there is one body, one head, not two heads, as if it were a monster, Christ, and Christ's vicar Peter, and Peter's successors.' ' We are also instructed by the Gospel, that in his power, there are two swords,

came thenceforward part of " the things that are God's," they substituted a divine for a human right to their acquisitions, and from being Vicars of Peter, promoted themselves to be Vicars of Christ. With their new title they assumed a new prerogative ; their authority was no longer merely temporal ; differing only in degree from that of any other liege lord ; it was a spiritual authority, spiritual from its end, and from the character of him who held it, and extending to *the control of all earthly power for the good of the Church*. Such is the authority claimed by Innocent and Boniface. The bull of the latter was renewed by Clement the Fifth, with some especial exceptions in favour of the kingdom of France, and finally ratified by Leo the Tenth, in the fifth Council of Lateran. Leo speaks of the *jurisdiction* implied in the title of the *Vicar of Christ* in the following terms:—" Christ when about to leave this world and depart to the Father, in the solidity of the rock did institute Peter and the successors of Peter to be his vicars ; to whom, as we are instructed by the Book of Kings, obedience is so indispensable, that whosoever doth not obey must die the death."—*Conc. Lat. Sess. ii.* When the Reformation began, the Popes proceeded, in virtue of this title, to excommunicate heretical princes ; and, in the interval between the excommunications of Henry and Elizabeth, *Pius the Fourth incorporated the title into the creed which bears his name*. This creed is professed on oath by all secular priests having the cure of souls, all regulars, all members of religious orders, including military orders, which such are in existence.—*Dupin's Ecclesiastical History*.

to wit, the spiritual and 'the temporal.' 'Therefore, if the earthly power shall deviate, its error shall be made known by the spiritual power ; but, if the spiritual shall deviate, the inferior spiritual shall be corrected by its superior spiritual ; but the supreme spiritual power can be judged by God alone, not by man ; the Apostle bearing witness, that the spiritual man judges all things, but is himself judged by none.' 'Moreover, (it concludes) *that every human creature be subject to the Roman Pope, we declare, define, and pronounce to be altogether necessary to salvation.*' "

No. VI.

Third Council of Lateran.

THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN delivered to the Lords' Committee (p. 775) a copy of part of canon 27 of the Third Council of Lateran, which Council is maintained to be general by the Class-book of Maynooth, and which the priests consequently "receive and confess." It runs thus: "Whereas blessed Leo saith, that although Church-discipline being satisfied with the judgment of the priest, doth not inflict bloody vengeance, yet is it assisted by the edicts of Catholic princes ; so that men often seek a remedy unto salvation, while they dread that corporeal punishment will befall them. Therefore we resolve to subject to an *anathema*, all who shall presume to receive or shelter in their houses or lands, those who are called Puritans, Patrins, or Publicans. And we enjoin all the faithful, that *for the remission of their sins they oppose themselves manfully to such horrors, and defend the Christian people from them by force of arms.* Trusting also in the mercy of God and the authority of the blessed Apostles Peter and Paul, *we take off two years' penance* from all faithful Christians who shall take arms for the purpose of subduing them, according to the counsel of their bishops or other prelates ; and if they shall be engaged in this service longer than two years, we leave it to the discretion of the bishops to grant them more ample indulgence in proportion to the extent of their labours."

Fourth Council of Lateran.

CANON III.

“ Let the heretics, after their condemnation, be given up to the secular powers or their officers, to be punished according to their demerits, the clerks being first degraded. Let their goods be confiscated, if they be laics, and if clerks, be applied to the use of the Church. Let those likewise, who lie under vehement suspicion of heresy, be anathematized, unless they give proofs of their innocence; and if they remain for a year under the sentence of *anathema*, let them be condemned as heretics. Let the temporal lords be admonished, (and, if necessary, be compelled by the censures of the Church,) that as they desire to be accounted faithful, they take an oath to *exterminate all heretics or excommunicated persons* who may be within their territories. And let every person whatsoever be bound by oath to observe this chapter before he be admitted to any authority, spiritual or temporal. But if the temporal lord, being required and admonished by the Church, shall neglect to purge his land of this *heretical filthiness*, let him be excommunicated by the metropolitan and the other bishops of the province. And if he prove contumacious, let notice be given at the end of a year, to the sovereign pontiff, in order that he may pronounce the vassals absolved from their allegiance, and to give up the land to be occupied by Catholics, who, *when they shall have exterminated the heretics*, are to possess it without opposition; saving, however, the right of the lord paramount, provided he offer no hindrance or impediment. And let the Catholics, who, taking upon them the badge of the cross, shall gird themselves to the extermination of heretics, enjoy the same indulgences and sacred privileges which are granted to those who go to the Holy Land,” &c. &c.

Council of Constance.

HIS GRACE THE ARCHBISHOP OF DUBLIN delivered to the Lords' Committee part of a decree of this Council, which is as follows:—

“ That notwithstanding the safe conducts of the emperor of kings, &c., inquiry may be held by the *competent*, (that is, the ecclesiastical judges,) concerning heretical pravity. The present holy

synod declares, that no safe conduct to heretics or persons suspected of heresy, granted by the emperor, or kings, or any secular powers, in the belief that they might thereby recal them from their errors, by what tie soever they may have bound themselves, can or ought to create any prejudice to the Catholic faith or ecclesiastical jurisdiction but that such safe conduct notwithstanding, the competent ecclesiastical judge may examine into the errors of such persons, and proceed against them and punish them, as far as justice shall advise, if they obstinately refuse to retract their errors, although they come to the place of trial, trusting to the safe conduct, and would not have come otherwise ; and that the person so promising remains under no obligation, as he has done all that in him lies. Which decree being read, it was approved by their lordships, the bishops, in the name of the four nations, and by the most Reverend Father the Cardinal Bishop of Ortico, in the name of the College of Cardinals. *It is agreed.*” * “The reason I mention the decree of the council is (said his Grace the Archbishop of Dublin,) that it is not merely an application of the principle to the individuals, but *it is laid down as a regular decree, declared, and defined.*”

The decree above given is usually quoted by Protestant writers as a proof that the lawfulness of breaking faith with heretics, is a tenet of the Roman Catholic Church. “The charge of holding it to be lawful to break faith with heretics (says Mr. Charles Butler, in his Historical Memoirs, ii. p. 454,) is certainly one of the heaviest accusations brought by Protestants against Catholics. It is examined at great length, and with great ability, by Dr. Hay; every form which the accusation can assume, is exhibited and discussed; and every answer to it, *which the case affords*, is ably, perspicuously, and, in the writer’s opinion, ‘triumphantly urged.’” The reader will admire the caution of Mr. Butler: “EVERY ANSWER WHICH THE CASE AFFORDS. The Church has a certain jurisdiction over heretics; a jurisdiction which

* We are informed by the *Maynooth Class-book*, that “this Council in its last session, drew up a form of questions to be proposed to all who were suspected of favouring the errors of Wyckliffe or Huss. The form was to this effect: Whether they believe that the condemnatory sentences against *Wyckliffe, Huss, and Jerome of Prague*, passed by the holy general Council of Constance upon their persons, their books, and their doctrines, were legally and justly passed, and to be believed and firmly maintained, as such, by all Catholics? Thus, proceeds the *Class-book*, the Council ordered, that if a man wished to be called a Catholic, he should condemn the books and doctrines of heretics, aye, and their persons too, lest under the pretext of excusing persons so notoriously heretical, their errors should be defended.” The *Class-book* adduces this proceeding, as illustrating a proposition which it maintains, “that the Church cannot err in dogmatical facts, that is, in its judgment concerning the doctrinal propositions that are extracted from any book.”

it possesses by divine right, and of which, therefore, it cannot be deprived by human power. Individuals may renounce this right, and civil governors condemn it; yet it remains inherent and unalienable; all acts to the contrary are null and invalid, as being unjust in themselves, and done without authority; and the only obligation which even an *oath* could impose in such cases, would be an obligation to repentance.”—*Phelan and O’Sullivan’s Digest of Evidence on the State of Ireland*, 1824, 1825. Part II.

No. VII.

Election for the County of Westmeath.—Interference of the Roman Catholic Priests.

THE following facts connected with the extraordinary interference of the Roman Catholic clergy, at the county of Westmeath election, are transcribed from the petition of ROBERT SMYTH, ESQ. (late M. P. for the county, and a candidate at the late election,) which was presented to the House of Commons, on the 22d November, 1826.

“ That the Roman Catholic priests, also with the privity, sanction, and consent of said H. M. Tuite, interfered in such a manner at said election as to destroy the freedom of election, for petitioner saith, that upwards of forty Roman Catholic priests having been assembled in the said town of Mullingar during said election, not only did all or most of them preach from the pulpit and altar in favour of the said H. M. Tuite, but actually went to voters of their own persuasion individually, and persuaded several of those who otherwise would have voted for petitioner, that they would commit perjury if they voted for the petitioner, or any one but said H. M. Tuite, and in their clerical character, and as if discharging their clerical duty as priests, both publicly in the chapels, and privately at the residence of the voters, declared that *they would not give to the voters who should vote for petitioner the rights of the Church, or allow them to attend mass, but would excommunicate them*; and said priests also went to the houses of voters, and preached the same doctrine to the families of voters, whereby the voters in many instances were deterred from voting for petitioner as they had resolved to do and would otherwise have done, and were induced and intimidated to vote for said H. M. Tuite; the said priests also actually brought the voters in carriages

and cars, and accompanied them to the hustings and polled them ; the said priests also preaching, and exhorting, and threatening in the public streets, and, aided by large mobs, taking by force the freeholders who were ready to vote for petitioner, and bringing them to the booths, where they made them vote for said Tuite, and on every road and avenue leading to the town there were mobs, headed in several instances by priests, who drove back and prevented freeholders in the interest of petitioner from coming into the town to poll, whereby petitioner submits the freedom of election was destroyed, and the privileges of the House violated, and petitioner deprived of the right which he ought to have, of being voted for and elected by such electors as might and did wish to poll for petitioner ; that encouraged by the advice and conduct of the said Roman Catholic priests, large mobs of the friends and adherents of said H. M. Tuite went out at night, and carried away from their houses several persons who would have voted for the petitioner, and by terror compelled them to go to the hustings and to vote for said H. M. Tuite, and by threats prevented several persons from coming to vote for the petitioner, and several of the persons who voted for him were assaulted, ill-treated, and wounded by the friends and adherents of said H. M. Tuite, on their return from the hustings ; and in fact above one hundred persons were thus wounded, and two men were killed, one a messenger of the petitioner, who had gone to procure the attendance of freeholders, and several freeholders were actually threatened with death if they voted for the petitioner, and that their houses would be burned, insomuch that by the threats and intimidations held out by said Roman Catholic clergymen and said mobs, persons were deterred from coming forward in support of the petitioner, although they had promised to do so, and would have done so if left to their own will and desire ; and in particular above thirty persons who were entitled to vote and intended to vote for the petitioner having remained unpolled in the barony of Delvin, were prevented from polling in consequence of the sheriff having closed that booth by reason of more than twenty voters not having polled or tendered their votes, or being referred to the sheriff for decision, on the 29th day of June last, but which deficiency of votes in said booth on said day was occasioned by the violence of the mob and the intimidation and undue and unconstitutional influence of the Romish priests, whereby voters were prevented from polling in that booth on the said day in sufficient numbers to keep said booth open."

County of Waterford Election.—Interference of the Roman Catholic Priests.

THE late election for the county of Waterford having been rendered so notorious by the extraordinary interference of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, the following facts connected therewith, are subjoined from the petition of LORD GEORGE BERESFORD, (late M. P. for the county, and a candidate at the late election,) which was presented to the House of Commons, on the 22d of November, 1826.

“That the peasantry of the county of Waterford, from among whom the great majority of the forty-shilling freeholders of said county are taken, are almost exclusively Roman Catholics, and are from their ignorance and superstition consequent upon a want of education peculiarly liable to be made the tools of any of the Roman Catholic clergy who might think proper to mislead or impose upon them for sinister purposes, insomuch that many of the peasants of the county of Waterford believe that every Roman Catholic clergyman is possessed of the power of working miracles, and all of them attach an importance to the blessing or curse of a priest, which would scarcely be credited by those who had not lived amongst them, and petitioner is informed and believes, that to be excluded by the priest from what are called the rites of the Church, such as confession, absolution, &c. is considered by them to endanger, if not *exclude them from salvation*; that the discipline of the Romish Church places the entire patronage of each diocese at the disposal of its bishop in the first instance, and therefore places the clergy of that diocese under his control, and thus invests him with a power over them which is nearly despotic, while the bishop himself is only amenable to the See of Rome for this discharge of his spiritual authority and jurisdiction; that the Roman Catholic bishop of Waterford, called the Right Reverend Patrick Kelly, has, ever since the late dissolution of Parliament was first expected, taken a great interest, and a most prominent and active part in the election for the county of Waterford, and so long back as the month of September 1825, the said Roman Catholic bishop, while officiating at public mass to a great concourse of people, principally of the lower classes, assembled in the great chapel of Waterford, after describing the contest between the petitioner and the said Henry Villiers Stuart for the representation of the said county, as one in which the interests of the Roman Catholic Church were deeply involved, declared, that *any Roman Catholic who would vote*

against his religion at the approaching election (meaning thereby any Roman Catholic who would vote for the petitioner and against the said Henry Villiers Stuart) *would be guilty of a mortal sin*; and that said bishop has from thence till the actual commencement of the election, and during the progress thereof, continued, both by public exhortations and private admonitions, remonstrances and *threats of infliction of ecclesiastical censures*, to use every means in his power to promote the success of the said Henry Villiers Stuart; and among other means resorted to, has issued orders of the most peremptory nature to the clergy of his diocese to use their exertions, collectively and individually, for the same purpose, and such entire confidence had the said bishop in the power which he possessed through the medium of his clergy over the minds of the Roman Catholic freeholders, that, when the said writ was actually issued for holding the said election, and its teste was known to be the 6th day of June, 1826, and when thereby it was known and acknowledged that the petitioner was secure of a very considerable majority of electors on the approaching election, and the said Henry Villiers Stuart had expressed his intention of declining the contest with petitioner, the said Roman Catholic bishop interfered, and requested the said Henry Villiers Stuart to persevere, and assured him that *he the said bishop who has not a foot of land in the county of Waterford, and is not a freeholder thereof, would insure his return*, and the said Henry Villiers Stuart did accordingly offer himself a candidate for the said county upon the faith of the said promise of the said Roman Catholic bishop; that what is called in the Romish Church *a jubilee*, having been proclaimed in the year 1825, by the authority of the Pope, and the *terms of the Pope's Bull* which proclaimed that jubilee being, that all those who would confess their sins with true repentance would be absolved from them on the further condition of their performing certain religious ceremonies, and visiting certain prescribed churches a certain number of times, and the chapels being in consequence crowded with persons professing the Roman Catholic religion, who had implicit confidence in the absolution thus offered to them by the head of the Church, the denunciations of the Romish Clergy in those chapels against petitioner and those who should vote for him, became more generally known and more effective, as were also the exhortations and promises held out to those who should vote for said Stuart; and that it is the practice of the Roman Catholic Church, at least in Ireland, to hold what are called stations in private houses, where a priest attends, and confessions are received and absolution given, and

the sacrament of the Eucharist is administered, and the injunctions or exhortations of the priests given at these stations are considered to be of the same force and efficacy as if delivered from the altar of the chapel; that at those stations, as well as at the various chapels in different parts of the county of Waterford, *the priests have refused to hear the confession of freeholders who had promised to vote for the petitioner, and have refused to give them absolution, and have declared publicly, that any Roman Catholic who would vote for the petitioner would be excluded from the benefit of the jubilee, would not be admitted to communion, nor receive absolution, or any other rite or ceremony of the Roman Catholic Church*; that in other instances, freeholders of the said county of Waterford, who have been sick and weak, have sent for a Roman Catholic clergyman, and solicited from him that spiritual comfort which a dying man expects, and that the priest has either refused to attend him, or having attended has refused to perform the usual religious ceremonies for him unless he would promise to vote against the petitioner and for the said Henry Villiers Stuart in the event of his recovery; that in other instances, the wives and children and relatives of Roman Catholic freeholders who had promised to vote for the petitioner, have, in like manner, when sick and apprehensive of death, required the attendance of the priest who was in the habit of visiting them, and have been either refused the benefit of his attendance altogether, or if the priest did attend them, he has denied them the confession or absolution they sought for, unless upon the additional terms of such freeholder promising to vote against the petitioner, and for the said Henry Villiers Stuart; that the Roman Catholic priests at the different chapels in the county of Waterford, for several months before the said election, denounced the petitioner as an avowed enemy of the Roman Catholic religion, and proclaimed publicly to the ignorant and credulous peasantry, including the Roman Catholic freeholders assembled, that to oppose the petitioner would be an acceptable service to the Roman Catholic Church, and that to support the petitioner would be an act of direct hostility against it, and that those who supported the petitioner should not be admitted to confession, or receive absolution or extreme unction, or any other rite or sacrament of the Roman Catholic Church, but would be expelled from the Church, and from the society of Catholics, and would die like dogs, without any of the consolations of religion, and would go at once to hell, and in short, that their votes at the election would place them in the kingdom of heaven or in the flames of hell to all eternity; *that instances have also occurred of a*

refusal by the Roman Catholic clergymen to administer the sacrament to individuals because they supported the petitioner ; that the Roman Catholic priests at such times, in order to give the greater weight to such their denunciations, declared to their congregations that they addressed them under the express orders of the bishop of the diocese ; that in some instances the threats held out by the Roman Catholic priests to the freeholders, to induce them to vote for the said Henry Villiers Stuart, and against the petitioner, were productive of most serious temporal evils to those who voted for the petitioner, inasmuch as they often threatened the said electors with being hooted at like mad dogs, being shunned and avoided by their friends and acquaintance, and being excluded and cut off from all intercourse with Roman Catholics, which threats were in many instances carried into full effect, and the Catholic freeholders, who were the subject of them, actually shut out from all society and intercourse with persons who like themselves professed the Catholic religion, and whenever they appeared in the road or street were halloo'd at as a " mad dog," a name by which it was publicly recommended by the emissaries of said priests to the Roman Catholics who voted with said Stuart, or who should do so, to hoot all who should be found to have voted for or wished well to the cause of petitioner, whereby a great degree of intimidation was created, as well as much actual danger ; that in other instances they pretended to reason with the peasant freeholder, respecting the nature of the bribery oath, and with a view to deprive petitioner of all support from the Catholic freeholders, persuaded them that the bribery oath would be put to every freeholder who voted for the petitioner, and that any Catholic freeholder who voted or who intended to vote for the petitioner, could not take it without perjury, inasmuch as, according to them, Lord George Beresford, meaning the petitioner, is the enemy of the Roman Catholic religion, and Mr. Stuart, meaning the said Henry Villiers Stuart, is the friend of it, that no Roman Catholic freeholder would vote for the enemy and against the friend of his Church, if it were not from some temporal motive, and if his motive be that he holds a valuable freehold under or from a landlord who supports Lord George Beresford, then the very holding of that farm is a bribe to him, and therefore he cannot take the bribery oath without perjury ; that in other instances the Roman Catholic clergymen threatened to inflict public curses upon all those Roman Catholic freeholders who should vote for Lord George Beresford, and some of them have actually at the chapels and at their stations publicly and solemnly cursed individual freeholders by name, who were known to intend to

vote or to have actually voted for the petitioner, and have not only cursed such freeholders themselves, but have cursed their wives and their children, their cattle and crops, and in like manner have publicly implored the blessing of God and of all his Saints upon those who voted for the said Henry Villiers Stuart, and against the petitioner ; that some of the said Roman Catholic clergymen have also threatened individual voters that they would impress a visible and indelible seal or brand upon them, and upon any Roman Catholic freeholders who should vote for the petitioner, which would remain upon him visible to his death ; that to excite terror in others, and thus to compel them to vote for Mr. Stuart, they have in some instances turned the freeholders who had promised to vote, or who had actually voted, for the petitioner out of their chapels in the presence of the congregation ; and in other instances, when the parishioners of a particular parish have appeared more firm than ordinary in resisting the attempts of the priests to control their votes, *they have suspended the celebration of mass in that parish altogether, until*, as they alleged, the parishioners were brought to a sense of their disobedience, and agreed to vote against the petitioner, and for the said Henry Villiers Stuart ; that these exertions of the Roman Catholic clergymen were continued during the whole time of the election ; that they also personally brought the freeholders themselves from their several places of abode to the city of Waterford, remained with them as their keepers in said city, and accompanied, or rather guarded them to the hustings, and acted throughout the whole of the election, as the open and avowed agents of the said Henry Villiers Stuart ; did so with his the said Stuart's privity and knowledge ; and that there never was less than one priest, and sometimes so many as six or eight priests in each booth during the said election, who endeavoured by their looks and gestures to intimidate the freeholders from voting for the petitioner, and to encourage them to vote for the said Henry Villiers Stuart, and some one or other of whom generally held a memorandum-book, in which he wrote as the freeholders voted, professedly for the purpose of keeping a list of those who voted for or against the petitioner, and in some instances it was avowed from the altar, previous to the election, that such a book would be kept to record the names of those who should vote for petitioner ; that by such the interference of the Roman Catholic clergy, the freedom of election, at said election, was not only grossly violated, and the minds of the Roman Catholic freeholders subjected to an undue and unconstitutional influence, but utterly destroyed for that time, and, in fact, the

Romish priests at said election, obtained by the means aforesaid, and illegally exercised, the absolute control and dominion over the great majority of the freeholders, which majority therefore did really and truly vote against their will, and at the will and pleasure of the said Romish priests only.”

No. VIII.

Resolutions and Petitions against the Roman Catholic Claims.

FROM the numerous meetings which were recently holden by the resident PROTESTANTS OF IRELAND in several cities, counties, and divers districts, we subjoin the following resolutions and petitions, that were unanimously agreed to as demonstrative of the spirit which prevailed not only at the respective places where adopted, but as elucidatory of the general feelings that predominate among the constitutional Protestants of that kingdom. We may cursorily observe, that the petitions presented to the legislature from that country, including among others, those from the counties of Cavan, Fermanagh, Donegal, Wicklow, Derry, Longford, Sligo, Waterford, Dublin, Armagh, King's County, Tyrone, and other districts, were signed generally by the *resident* Protestant noblemen,—the *resident* Protestant gentry and landed proprietors,—the *resident* Protestant barristers—the *resident* clergy, besides many thousands of Protestants, among whom were fellows and members of the University of Dublin.

ARMAGH PROTESTANT RESOLUTIONS.

Pursuant to a requisition, addressed to the High Sheriff of the County of Armagh, a very numerous meeting of the Protestant inhabitants of the County, took place in the city of Armagh, on the 24th January, 1827, “for the purpose of taking into consideration the expediency of petitioning Parliament *against* any further concessions to the Roman Catholics;” ACHESON ST. GEORGE, Esq. High Sheriff of the County, in the chair, when the following resolutions having been duly moved and seconded, were unanimously adopted.

“ That the daring and menacing language, in which the pretensions of the Roman Catholics are now maintained, has rendered it imperatively necessary, that the Protestants should declare their sentiments concerning claims affecting the essential principles of the Constitution.

“ That the Roman Catholic Association, which in a gross evasion of the law, has assumed all the functions of a *local legislature*, and has exercised those functions in exciting the Roman Catholics against the Protestants is destructive of the peace of Ireland, and ought to be suppressed.

“ That the interference of the Roman Catholic Clergy, in the elections of members of the House of Commons, is a violation of the Constitution, and tends to render the persons so returned, by many of the counties of Ireland, *the representatives, not of the landed proprietors of the country, but of the interests of the Church of Rome.*

“ That the Roman Catholic Clergy of Ireland have so strenuously opposed all efforts to diffuse education generally among the lower orders of the people, and thereby to moderate the mutual alienation of Roman Catholics and Protestants, that they cannot safely be entrusted with the management of any public funds to be applied to the purpose of education.

“ That though it is the decided opinion of this meeting, that an unrestrained liberty of conscience should be allowed to persons of all religious professions, it is also our deliberate and firm conviction, that Roman Catholics cannot safely be admitted into the legislature of a Protestant Government; because even the sincerity of their attachment to their own exclusive Church must dispose them to employ their influence for raising it to a *political ascendancy, which would enable it to crush the rights of Protestants, and to change and pervert the whole character of the Constitution.*”

TYRONE PROTESTANT PETITION.

The following Petition was unanimously adopted, at a numerous Meeting of the Protestant Magistrates, Clergy, Gentry, Freeholders, and Landholders of the County of Tyrone, convened by SAMUEL VESEY, Esq. High Sheriff of the said County, who presided on this occasion.

“ To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

“The Petition of the Undersigned, being Protestant Noblemen, Clergy, Gentlemen, and Freeholders of the County of Tyrone, humbly sheweth—

“ That your petitioners, observing the unjustifiable means which have been used to obtain a repeal of the restrictive laws still in force against such of his Majesty’s subjects in Ireland as profess the Roman Catholic religion; and, aware of the support this dangerous measure has received, from the erroneous views of some noblemen, who are deceived as to the true state of the country, in which they do not reside; and fearing lest silence should be construed into acquiescence in so hazardous a change in the Constitution, humbly state to your right honourable House their firm persuasion that such a change would be productive of the most dangerous consequences.

“ Your petitioners have long refrained from putting forward this opinion, lest it might add to the rancorous spirit which has actuated many of their Roman Catholic fellow-subjects since the Roman Catholic Association was first instituted in this country. But when they consider the unchangeable intolerance of that Church, which is now strengthened by the establishment of Jesuits in Ireland—when they observe the entire Roman Catholic Priesthood abusing their spiritual influence in the support of this Association, re-organized in defiance of the laws enacted against it—the freedom of the elective franchise violated, and a great part of the people blindly submitting to the guidance of men who publicly display a determined hostility to the Protestant religion—the circulation of the Scriptures—and the connection of Ireland with Great Britain, they cannot longer forbear to approach your right honourable House with their most earnest prayer, that you will not increase the power, nor add to the privileges of the members of the Church of Rome.”

KING'S COUNTY PROTESTANT PETITION.

The following Petition was unanimously adopted, at a numerous Meeting of the Protestant Magistrates, Clergy, Gentry, Freeholders, and Landholders of the King's county in Ireland.

“ To the Honourable the Commons of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, in Parliament assembled.

“ The Petition of the Undersigned, being Protestant Noblemen, Clergy, Gentlemen, and Freeholders of the King's County, humbly sheweth—

“ That grossly misrepresented as the sentiments of the Protestants of Ireland have been on the subject of Catholic Emancipation, we consider it incumbent on us at the present crisis to come forward, and unequivocally to declare our conviction of the extreme danger that would result to the British empire, from the concession of further privileges, including political power, to the Roman Catholics of this country.

“ That the evidence of passing events at home and abroad clearly shows, that Popery, in principle and practice, is unchanged and unchangeable; and that as our ancestors excluded Roman Catholics from political power, from a conviction that there is in the Church of Rome a principle inherently and incurably hostile to the well-being of a Protestant State; so, on the same grounds, your petitioners humbly submit to your honourable House the necessity of continuing such exclusion.

“ That the continued existence of the Roman Catholic Association in all its baneful influence, acting as an *imperium in imperio*; meeting for political discussion, levying taxes, and legislating for the country, in evasion or defiance of an Act of Parliament passed expressly for its suppression, is a subject which calls aloud for public investigation.

“ That the unconstitutional conduct of the Roman Catholic Priesthood, in exercising the spiritual terrors of their Church to influence and control the return of members to your honourable House, at the late elections in this country; their unchristian opposition to the circulation of the Holy Scriptures, as a means of enlightening and civilizing our benighted peasantry; the unwearied exertions of the Roman Catholic leaders to estrange and alienate the minds and hearts of his Majesty's Roman Catholic subjects from their allegiance, by every species of inflammatory misrepresentation, to the manifest endangering of the peace of this realm; their libellous calumnies of

the constituted authorities of the State, the Heir Presumptive of the Throne, his Majesty's ministers, and the prelates and clergy of the Established Church; their disloyal declarations of triumph, and rejoicing at the presumed calamities of Great Britain; their appeals to foreign states; the spirit of persecution evinced in the interdict to their bigoted Catholic countrymen to hold no commercial intercourse with their Protestant fellow-subjects;—that these and similar manifestations of the sentiments and feelings of the Roman Catholics of the present day, when they are merely petitioners for political power, evince beyond a doubt what the fate of Protestants would be, if the Church of Rome, through the insidious liberality of speculative legislators should again acquire in this realm the ascendancy to which she is evermore aspiring.

“That, upon these and similar grounds, your petitioners humbly pray that your honourable House will be pleased to take into your immediate and serious consideration the difficulties under which this country at present labours, and to apply such effectual remedies thereto as to your honourable House shall seem expedient, and petitioners will ever pray.—Dated at Parsonstown, this 2d day of January, 1827.”

S P E E C H

OF THE

RIGHT REVEREND LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM.



When the second reading of the Bill, for the removal of certain disqualifications of the Roman Catholics, was moved in the House of Lords, May 17th, 1825, WILLIAM, LORD BISHOP OF DURHAM (then of Llandaff), rose, and addressed their Lordships in the following eloquent, energetic, perspicuous, and truly Protestant diction.*

MY LORDS.—It is not without considerable reluctance that I rise to address your lordships on the present occasion. I am well aware of the animadversions to be expected by any one who ventures to oppose such a measure as that which is now under our consideration; a measure, in many respects, plausible and attractive; a measure, calculated to make impression not only on unwary and inconsiderate minds, but on some of the best feelings of our nature; a measure also, which comes to us under the sanction of the other House of Parliament, and advocated by persons of the highest talent and consideration. But, my Lords, these very circumstances powerfully operate upon my mind, not to shrink from declaring my sentiments, on a matter in which the interests of our religious as well as our civil establishments appear to me to be so deeply involved. I shall endeavour, however, to be as brief as possible in my observations, that I may not

* We have to apologize for the non-insertion of this constitutional oration in its proper place, but it shall be attended to in the next edition.

detain your lordships longer than I can well avoid from listening to those who may have a stronger claim to your attention.

My lords, if this were a question merely of *expediency*, a question solely as to the balance of advantages and disadvantages, of conveniencies and inconveniencies, likely to result from the proposed measure, I might be less disposed to take a part in the discussion. But if the benefits to be expected from it cannot be obtained without the sacrifice of some *essential principles* of our Protestant constitution and government; then, however desirable those benefits may appear, (to me, I own, they appear exceedingly dubious and problematical,) I must consider the proposal as one which it becomes not the Legislature to adopt.

Now, with respect to the *principles* to be maintained in this discussion, I conceive, my lords, that I have a right to assume them as points not to be called in question. They have, in fact, been conceded by the advocates of the measure, in former debates; and they are moreover distinctly and expressly recognized in the very preamble of the bill. The preamble sets forth, that the Protestant succession and the Protestant Episcopal Church of England and Ireland are *established permanently and inviolably*. Here is a direct acknowledgment, not only that *some* religious establishment is essential to the Constitution, but also that it shall be *Protestant and Episcopal*.

Assuming this, therefore, as the basis of the whole inquiry, we come to the main question, on what grounds are Roman Catholics excluded from certain privileges and favours granted to other members of the community?

To this question, my lords, I answer, that they are *not* excluded merely on account of their *theological* tenets: they are not excluded for holding the doctrines of transubstantiation, of the invocation of saints, the worship of images, or any other points in their creed or ritual which we deem to be errors and corruptions of Christianity. These are not, properly speaking, the disqualifications under which they labour, nor the true ground of those disabilities which the

legislature has thought fit to impose upon them. The real and only ground of their exclusion is this;—that they are (what they do not choose to call themselves,) PAPISTS.

My lords, I beg it may be distinctly understood, that I do not mean to use this term as a term of reproach, nor with the slightest intention to give offence. I have too high a respect for the general body of the Roman Catholics, to intend any such thing. But it is necessary, it is unavoidable, in the course of argument I have to pursue, that this their fixed and (I believe) unalterable characteristic should be kept in view. If, therefore, I should happen to use the terms Popery and Papist more frequently than I may wish to do, or than may be acceptable to many who hear me, I trust it will be excused. I certainly will endeavour to abstain from them as far as circumstances will permit.

What then, is the distinguishing feature of the real Papist? It is, my lords, the acknowledgment of *the Pope's supremacy*,—the acknowledgment, that, in certain respects, the Pope has an authority over the whole Christian world; and, consequently, that in whatever country, or under whatever government, the members of the Church of Rome are placed, they owe to him, as their supreme head, a special allegiance, and are bound, by an obligation paramount to all others, to render him homage and obedience.

To what *extent* this authority takes place, is another question. There have been times when it was claimed and exercised, as extending both to spiritual and temporal concerns. The power, however, which the popes formerly asserted over temporal concerns, it may be said, has long since died away, and ought not now to be taken into the account. It is true, indeed, that no direct assumption of this power has of late been attempted; and, hence, it is often alleged, that the pretended right is become obsolete, if not extinct. Nor am I unwilling, my lords, to argue as if it were so. Only let me be allowed to observe, that, even to this day, it has never been formally repealed, never authoritatively disclaimed. So long as the decrees of the Council of Trent continue to be the standard of Papal pretensions, and that council recog-

nises the authority of *anterior* councils, this asserted prerogative remains virtually in force. However dormant, it is not absolutely extinct; and were times and circumstances to permit its revival, the authority would still not be wanting to give it effect.

But, my lords, setting aside this part of the pretensions of the Papal See, it will suffice for my present purpose to confine our attention to its alleged supremacy in *spiritual* matters. This is, perhaps, the most important part of the inquiry, attempts being continually made to represent this spiritual supremacy as not involving any temporal interests, and, consequently, not interfering in any degree with the legitimate powers of the State.

My lords, of all fallacies none appears to me more palpable, more egregious, than that which regards spiritual authority as altogether unconnected with temporal. Theoretically, indeed, they are distinct; but practically, in most cases, it is hardly possible to disunite them. Like the soul and body, (I am using Bellarmine's illustration, my lords, not my own;)—like the soul and body, though each have special qualities and special interests of its own, yet they act one upon the other by mutual co-operation, and affect each other by mutual influence. It may be easy to say, this is a spiritual right, and that a temporal right; this is an exercise of civil power, and that of ecclesiastical:—but when you come to apply these to individual cases, they will be found so blended together, as to render their separation always difficult, sometimes impracticable. And this is in reality the main foundation of that alliance between Church and State, which exists in almost every well-constituted government, and which sustains the fabric of the British Constitution.

I contend, then, my lords, that if the spiritual authority be exercised, to its full extent, by a power distinct from that of the State, and assuming to itself a *supremacy* in that respect, it must, so far, become a direct infringement upon the temporal authority of the sovereign. But if it be said, that, even in this respect, the supremacy arrogated by the Pope over individuals of other states than his own, is

become so mitigated, or so diminished, as no longer to give just cause of alarm or offence; then it will be necessary, in order to judge rightly of this, that we examine somewhat more particularly in what this spiritual supremacy actually consists.

Spiritual power, my lords, is twofold; and the two parts of which it is composed have been clearly defined by one of the most distinguished ornaments of our Episcopal Bench, whom many of your lordships must have often heard in this House with admiration and delight;—I mean, Bishop Horsley. In a speech on the subject we are now discussing, that eminent prelate remarked the just and proper distinction between the “power of order” and the “power of jurisdiction;” both appertaining to spiritual authority, but “quite distinct, and of distinct origin.” The power of *order*, my lords, is simply and purely spiritual, and can emanate from none but a spiritual authority. It is that power which confers the capability of exercising spiritual functions; or, in other words, qualifies a person to minister in sacred things. This power the sovereign, the temporal ruler of the state, being a layman, cannot possibly confer. He has it not himself, and therefore cannot communicate it to others. It originates in another and a higher source. And this is all that properly belongs to the power of order. The power of *jurisdiction* goes much farther than this. It extends to the entire *government* of the ecclesiastical body, to the appointment of particular persons to exercise spiritual functions throughout the State, to the rules and regulations by which they shall be directed, or to their respective remunerations according to the stations they hold in the ministry; in short, to every thing which, in ecclesiastical, no less than in civil polity, it is the duty of the legislative and executive government of the country to provide for the general benefit of the community.

Now, it is manifest, my lords, that this latter power, though spiritual in its purpose and effect, cannot be exercised by any other authority than that of the State, much less by any *foreign* power, without a palpable interference

with that authority; neither can it be carried into effect without a perceptible and powerful influence upon men's temporal interests.

It is, however, asserted, that the power claimed in modern times, by the See of Rome, is nothing more than that which belongs to the church only, and which has been expressly disclaimed by the Sovereigns of this country as a part of their prerogative. Let us examine into the accuracy of this assertion.

The true line of distinction I apprehend, my lords, to be this:—spiritual *functions* belong exclusively to the *church*; spiritual *jurisdiction* belongs to the *State*, as allied to the church, and although exercised by the church, is derived from the State. Nowhere, perhaps, has this distinction been more clearly or strongly marked than in the 37th article of our Church, and in Queen Elizabeth's injunctions, which may be considered as decisive upon the point.

The Puritans, it is well known, took offence at the assertion of the Regal Supremacy in spiritual concerns; misconceiving, as it appears, or misrepresenting, its real intent and meaning. To quiet such scruples, and at the same time to re-assert the doctrine in its full and proper sense, the 37th article declares as follows:—"The Queen's Majesty hath the *chief power* in this realm of England, and other her dominions, unto whom the *chief government* of all estates of this realm, whether they be *ecclesiastical* or *civil*, in all causes, doth appertain, and is not, nor ought to be, *subject to any foreign jurisdiction*."

"Where we attribute to the Queen's Majesty the *chief government* (by which titles we understand the minds of some *slandrous* folks to be offended), we give not to our princes the *ministering* either of God's Word, or of the Sacraments: the which thing the injunctions also lately set forth by Elizabeth, our Queen, do most plainly testify; but that only prerogative which we see to have been given always to all godly princes, in Holy Scriptures, by God himself, i. e. that they should rule *all estates and*

degrees committed to their charge by God, whether they be *ecclesiastical* or *temporal*, and restrain with the civil sword the stubborn and evil doers.

“The Bishop of Rome *hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England.*”

Here, my lords, nothing is disclaimed, on the part of the sovereign, but that which, it is manifest, cannot appertain to any *temporal* power, the right of exercising *spiritual functions*. And what are those functions? “The *ministering* either of God’s Word, or of the Sacraments.” The Sovereign though Supreme Head both of Church and State, cannot take upon himself to preach, to baptize, to administer the Eucharist, to order, to confirm, or to consecrate. These are offices purely and exclusively spiritual: and Queen Elizabeth rejects the very supposition of their belonging to the sovereign as a *slandorous* construction of her asserted claim to supremacy. But she still maintains, and abates nothing of her title to supreme *jurisdiction*; nor will allow any estates of the realm, whether ecclesiastical or civil, to be subject to any *foreign* jurisdiction. Her authority is declared (as had been more fully set forth in her injunctions, twelve years before), to extend to “all manner of persons born within these her realms, of what estate, either ecclesiastical or temporal, soever they be; so as no other foreign power shall or ought to have any *superiority* over them.” Thus do the injunctions and articles agree together; and from both is drawn the conclusion, that “The Bishop of Rome hath no jurisdiction in this realm of England:”—no jurisdiction, my lords, *of any kind*.

My lords, I think it clearly follows from hence, that, according to the fundamental principles of our Protestant Constitution, no subject can be considered as paying full and *undivided* allegiance to the sovereign, whose notions of the regal supremacy do not come up to this standard. If *spiritual* jurisdiction or authority, in whatever degree, be acknowledged as the right of some *other* potentate, that, whether it be more or less, is so much subtracted

from the supreme authority claimed, and justly claimed, by the Head of the State; and the subject who is placed in such a predicament can pay only a *divided* allegiance to his rightful sovereign; an *allegiance*, which, however sincere and faithful as far as it extends, is avowedly imperfect in this respect; and, consequently, curtails his right to the same favour and privileges, the same degree of trust and power, which others may enjoy who submit to the State without any such reservations or restrictions.

That the Roman Catholics actually stand in this predicament, cannot surely be denied. I have already adverted to Bellarmine's opinion on this subject, and which he states to have been the commonly received opinion in his day: and your lordships will recollect that Bellarmine was not in the best odour with the See of Rome, his notions of the Papal prerogative not being sufficiently high to reach the views there entertained of the Pope's Supremacy. His doctrine, my lords, (and he gives it as a *moderated* opinion between two extremes) is this:—"That the Pope, as Pope, has not directly and immediately any temporal, but only a spiritual power; nevertheless, that *by reason of the spiritual, he has, at least indirectly, a certain power, and that supreme, in temporals:*"—"That the power of the Pope is indeed properly, in itself, and directly, *spiritual*; but that by it he can dispose of the temporal things of all Christians, *when that is required for the end of the spiritual power, to which the ends of all temporal powers are subordinate*; for though he has no merely temporal power, yet he has, *in ordine ad bonum spirituale*, the highest power over temporals." Again;—"The spiritual power does not mix itself in temporal concerns, but suffers all things to proceed, as before the union, so long as they do not oppose the spiritual end, or be not necessary to obtain it. But if any thing of this sort occurs, *the spiritual can, and ought, to coerce the temporal*, by any way or means which shall seem necessary for its purpose."—This exposition needs no comment.

But, my lords, how stands this matter in the present

day? Will the Roman Catholic subjects of these realms be content to acknowledge the King's Supremacy "*in all causes, and over all persons, ecclesiastical as well as civil?*" Will they allow that the Pope has no spiritual *jurisdiction* within these realms? Will the Pope himself relinquish his claim to *appoint* the clergy, and to *rule* them? Will he forego his superintendance over them in their respective diocesan or pastoral characters, or surrender such points as may interfere with the jurisprudence of this country? My lords, I hardly need say, that hitherto no symptom of a disposition to do this has appeared, either in the Pope himself, or in those who are bound in allegiance to him. Again, therefore, I must insist, that theirs can only be a *divided* allegiance; and that, therefore, they are disqualified for such an extension of privileges and favours, as may be fairly expected by their fellow-subjects who labour not under similar disqualifications.

I am anxious, however, to fortify myself in these representations by *authorities* which your lordships may deem unexceptionable. Among those who are commonly reputed to have been what are called High-Churchmen, I might name Laud, Stillingfleet, Jeremy Taylor, Leslie the non-juror, Hickes, Atterbury, the two Sherlocks, and Bishop Horsley; not to mention a living prelate now near me, who has treated this subject with his wonted learning and ability. All these have (I believe) touched upon the Papal Supremacy as among the most dangerous errors of the Church of Rome.

But these notions, my lords, are not confined to High-Church writers; and on the present occasion, I would rather resort to authorities more likely to be well received by the advocates of the proposed concessions to the Roman Catholics: writers, well known to have been zealously attached to the principles of the Revolution, and friendly to the extension of religious liberty. Among these, I would first mention Archbishop Wake, whom I remember to have had the gratification of hearing warmly eulogised in this House; an eulogy in which I can most cordially join. That excellent

prelate laboured with great earnestness to effect an union between the English and Gallican Churches; and after a long and patient perseverance in the attempt, had the mortification to find his endeavours frustrated, and the whole scheme abandoned, in consequence of the interference of the See of Rome, and the impracticability of coming to a right understanding upon this point of the Pope's spiritual authority. Other prelates of the same class were Tillotson, Burnet, and Gibson,—all strenuous opponents to Popery, yet sincere advocates of toleration. But I pass over these to call the attention of your lordships to those great writers, Locke and Hoadley, on whom I have more than once heard the highest encomiums bestowed in this House: and the point, my lords, to which I request your attention, is the sort of estimation in which the Roman Catholics themselves appear to hold these admired friends of religious freedom. For this purpose, we can hardly resort to higher authority than that of Dr. Milner, the oracle of the present day among the English Members of the Romish Church. These, my lords, are Dr. Milner's sentiments concerning Locke and Hoadley.—“The Socinian Locke, who will not allow of Catholics being *tolerated*, on the demonstrated false pretext that they cannot tolerate other Christians.”—“Bishop Hoadley, who had no religion at all of his own, would not allow the Catholics to enjoy theirs, because, he says, no oaths and solemn assurances, no regard to truth, justice, or honour, can restrain them. This is the hypocritical plea for the intolerance of a man who was in the constant habit of violating all his oaths and engagements to a church which had raised him to rank and fortune, and who systematically pursued its degradation into his own Anti-Christian Socinianism, by professed deceit and treachery.” So much, my lords, for the good-will which Papists bear towards writers whom, of all others, their Protestant friends are continually holding up as models of liberality of sentiment.

Together with Bishop Hoadley, I might also mention Dr. Sykes and others who distinguished themselves in the Bangorian controversy, as advocates of Bishop Hoadley's sentiments

on spiritual and ecclesiastical authority. Dr. Sykes, in particular, wrote a tract with this title; "Enquiry how far Papists ought to be treated here as good Subjects; and how far they are chargeable with the Tenets commonly imputed to them." It is true, that this and other similar publications came forth at or near the time when the Pretender had raised a rebellion in this country, and much of their weight and influence may be supposed to have been derived from that circumstance. But what I particularly wish to impress upon your lordships is this;—that, to whatever occurrences they might owe their origin, the arguments and mode of reasoning contained in them have little reference to any particular crisis; but turn chiefly, if not entirely, on those fixed and unalterable tenets of Popery, which then bound, and still continue to bind, all Papists, in obedience to the Holy See. It is, in short, their professing a *divided* allegiance between the Pope and their Sovereign, that renders them, in the opinion of these writers, absolutely disqualified for places of trust and power in the State.

Descending now to our own times, what do we find to be the *present* state of Popery, with reference to these points in particular, as well as to other tenets which distinguish it from the Popish Church?

My lords, there can hardly, I conceive, be a greater cause of offence to a Roman Catholic, than to question the *immortality* of his faith. It has ever been the boast of the Church of Rome, that its creed is unchangeable, and its authority infallible. Its tenets are, at least, in the present day, considered to be conformable with the decrees of the Council of Trent; and consequently may fairly be tried by that standard. And while the catechism of that Council and the creed of Pope Pius V. are received as accredited authorities by which the Roman Catholics still abide, we can hardly be accused of misrepresentation in bringing their statements to that test.

In what respect, then, is Popery changed? It is continually assumed by those who advocate the Roman Catholic claims, that their peculiar tenets are no longer maintained to

the same extent, or in the same acceptation as heretofore; but have undergone certain modifications and interpretations, which render them comparatively harmless. Nay, great efforts have been recently made, both by Romish writers and their friends, to show that their doctrines approximate much more towards those of the Church of England than is generally supposed to be the case, and have at length approached so nearly to our own, as to present but a shade of difference between them.

My lords, there is nothing new in these attempts. The very same efforts were made long since, by Bossuet, and were successfully encountered and overthrown by Archbishop Wake. It has often been the policy of the Church of Rome to resort to this expedient, both for the purpose of its own vindication, and to facilitate the work of *proselytism* among Protestants. A fresh instance of this policy has also been brought before us, in the examination of certain Roman Catholic prelates before the committees of the two Houses of Parliament on the state of Ireland. A very favourable opportunity then presented itself to them for such a purpose, of which they availed themselves with no inconsiderable skill and ability. Several of the questions put to them appear to have been of that kind which are technically called "leading questions;" such as almost suggested the answers sought for, and such as those who were to furnish the answers might be supposed most willing to give. In this way, nothing was easier than to frame a plausible representation of several articles of the Romish faith, and to give them such a colouring as might readily satisfy those who were possessed of no other information on the subject. Half an hour's *cross-examination* might greatly have altered the aspect of such evidence, and have placed it in a very different light.

But, my lords, taking this evidence in the most favourable point of view, what is the result? Is any point of the Pope's spiritual supremacy abandoned? Does not Papal infallibility (so far as concerns an absolute submission to the Papal See in matters of faith) remain the same? Is its principle of intolerance renounced? Is it less intent than heretofore

upon proselytism? Is its dominion over the consciences of men less absolute than in former times? If in these respects it still presents to us the same features, there is no need to extend the inquiry to other doctrines less immediately affecting the question before us.

To say nothing more on the subject of Papal Supremacy, let it be remembered, my lords, that the spiritual authority of the Church of Rome extends to matters of *practice* as well as of *faith*. Such also is the spirit of *proselytism* she cherishes, that her clergy are bound to it by the most solemn engagements at their ordination; an obligation never imposed upon our own clergy. Above all, my lords, look at the *absolute dominion* exercised by the Romish bishops and pastors over every individual of their flocks; to which, perhaps, there is nothing parallel in any other Christian community: to instance only, in the use of *auricular confession*, as it is termed; a duty, exacted from every member of their Church, and made imperative as to every thought, word and deed, under penalties the most appalling. My lords, it is frightful to think upon the state of subjection in which the whole body of the laity are thus enthralled, and of the unbounded influence thus obtained over them by the Priesthood; more especially when connected with the *inviolable secrecy* imposed on the Priest himself, in the discharge of this part of his duty. Of the possible effect of this upon the interests, nay, the very existence of government, we may form some conception, from the evidence given by Dr. Doyle, in his last examination before your lordships' Committee. Being interrogated with respect to the effect of this obligation to secrecy, upon that part of the oath of allegiance which requires the subject to disclose to the government any treasonable designs or practices which may come to his knowledge, Dr. Doyle replies, "The secrets communicated in confession, are such as we are supposed to become acquainted with as Ministers of the Sacrament of Penance; and in that capacity we do not consider ourselves bound, by the oath of allegiance which we take, to reveal secrets *committed to us in that way*; and as our rite of confession is known to the laws, and our

doctrines with regard to it universally acknowledged to exist in our Church, the oath which binds us to discover any treason against the State, or against his Majesty, which may come to our knowledge, does not oblige us to reveal anything with which we may become acquainted in Sacramental confession; this is the manner in which we understand the clause of the oath."

This is, indeed, an extraordinary instance of ingenuity in the interpretation of an oath; and I might comment on the insecurity to the State, in allowing such a restriction of its meaning as must render it almost nugatory; since it might totally annul its operation in the very case where the danger would be most instant and inevitable. But, my lords, I advert to it chiefly for the purpose of making an observation, which has frequently occurred to me, in reflecting on this subject. It has often been cast as a reproach upon Roman Catholics, that they are not to be bound by the obligations of an oath, because they admit of certain *mental reservations* incompatible with its strict and full observance. My lords, I have always felt this to be an unworthy and offensive insinuation, unjustly affecting the characters of a body of men whom I cannot persuade myself to regard as deserving of such an opprobrium. I believe the Roman Catholic nobility and gentry to be as incapable of thus tampering with an oath, as any of the Protestant nobility and gentry of the realm. I believe them to be as incapable of *mental reservation*; and, therefore, in their mode of reconciling the allegiance they swear to the sovereign in temporals, with that which they conscientiously hold to be due to the Pope in spirituals, I have always imagined that they satisfied their minds by some such constructive interpretation, as that which Dr. Doyle has here distinctly avowed with regard to the secrecy of confession. I have conceived they might reason thus;—the State *knows* our obligations to the Pope; it *knows* that we owe him obedience, implicit obedience, on certain points; it *knows* that we regard this as an obligation paramount to all others; and therefore it cannot accuse us of *mental* or *secret* reservation, in taking the oath under such a restriction. The reservation is not

mental, is not *insidious*, is not *delusive*: it is open and avowed; and if the legislature think fit to accept these our *conditional* protestations and fidelity, and submission, there can be no misunderstanding on either side.—If this, my lords, be a correct notion, that I have formed, Dr. Doyle may fairly be considered, in this instance, as virtually speaking the general sentiments both of the clergy and laity of his communion, on every point of duty relative to the State as well as this; and the State has only to view the matter in this light, and act accordingly. But can it be doubtful, what, in prudence and due regard to the public safety, ought to be the conduct of the legislature towards persons whose upright, honourable, and conscientious adherence to their principles, (for upright, honourable, and conscientious I most willingly presume it to be,) makes it impossible for them to render more than such a conditional and imperfect submission to the government under which they live?

My lords, there are several other points on which I had intended to make some observations: but I refrain, from an unwillingness to trespass further on your attention. Much might be said on the effects of penance, absolution, and indulgences, as maintained by the Romish Church; on the acknowledged difficulties respecting marriage, as stated also by Dr. Doyle; on excommunication; on the Pope's power in nominating to episcopal sees; and on the general principle, still so pertinaciously maintained, of the entire *independence* of the Church of Rome, in its spiritual capacity, on any temporal authority, rule or governance. While these continue to be the avowed tenets of the Roman Catholics, again I ask, are they not really *Papists*? and can their admissibility to the same power and trust with other subjects be reasonably claimed, or safely granted?

My lords, in making these observations, let me once more disclaim any sentiments of illwill, any hostile or unchristian feelings towards those who are the objects of them. My lords, if I know myself, I am not of an intolerant spirit; and it is painful to me to seem opposed to a body of men whom I know how to respect and to esteem. In the early part of

my professional life, I lived in habits of social and friendly intercourse with persons of distinction among them, for whom I entertained a sincere regard. With others of the same description I have since cultivated acquaintance, and hope still to continue doing so. I can honour a Papist, who is a Papist indeed; and I can honour Dissenters of other denominations, who are Dissenters indeed. But I cannot equally honour those who affect an approximation of sentiment to ourselves in matters even of essential importance, where there can be no real agreement. The best foundation of unaffected good-will between parties thus differing in religion, is, in my opinion, an honest and ingenuous avowal of such difference, without compromising our own principles, or being intolerant of those of others.

One more observation, my lords, I cannot forbear to offer. The declared object of the proposed measure is to conciliate the Roman Catholics. But has it been sufficiently considered, what may be the result, with respect to the great mass of the *Protestant* community? The effect, even in removing dissatisfaction from the *lower orders*, at least, of the Roman Catholics, appears to me exceedingly doubtful, if not hopeless. But supposing it to have that effect, what are likely to be the feelings of our Protestant fellow-subjects? What can be expected but a revival of those protracted and acrimonious controversies which, from the Restoration to the Revolution, so vehemently agitated the public mind? A struggle might probably ensue; and not only would it, under such circumstances, be the natural *inclination* of the clergy of our Establishment, but it would become their bounden *duty* to press forward in vindication of their own spiritual rights and liberties, and those of the laity committed to their charge. I have no fear, my lords, of the issue of such a struggle. When I look around me, and see the daily increasing phalanx of able and learned defenders of our Church, I cannot doubt of a favourable result: and having now passed the meridian of life myself, it gives me increased satisfaction to contemplate such a prospect. Nevertheless, my lords, I cannot but deprecate any course of proceeding

that may render such a conflict necessary. I am too conversant with polemics, (perhaps have been too much of a polemic myself,) not to know that these contests unavoidably engender strife, and enmity, and bitterness, of which no one can foresee the termination.

My lords, for these reasons, among many others, I cannot but view the present bill as most objectionable in its principles, and ill-calculated to produce any such effects as would justify your lordships in suffering it to pass into a law. I must therefore meet it with my decided negative.

The Bill was negatived by a majority of 48.

